Welcome to the hotel where they don't run from mayhem...they thrive on it.
VOLTAGE
EVA MARKS

Voltage

Eva Marks

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About the Book

They say forbidden fruit tastes the sweetest. It does. Or rather, *they* do…

My stepson, Carter, and I run a hotel for members only. And when I say *members*, I mean criminals.
We give them a safe place to conduct business. If anyone steps out of line, we put them in their place. Our rules save lives, and I never wanted to break any of them.

Until now.

Somewhere along the line, Carter grew into a man. Strong and capable. I want him in a way that's *beyond* inappropriate.

But everything got even messier when he met her.
Amara is sweet. Innocent. She doesn't belong here. Which doesn't stop Carter from wanting her.
It doesn't stop *me* from wanting her, either. Wanting both of them… together.

In our world, weakness is a death sentence. Carter and Amara are my weakness…and I'm theirs.
So, this can only end in happily ever after, or bloodshed. There's no middle ground.

Not at Voltage.

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Contents

Dedication
A Note From The Author
Playlist
1. CHAPTER ONE
2. CHAPTER TWO
3. CHAPTER THREE
4. CHAPTER FOUR
5. CHAPTER FIVE
6. CHAPTER SIX
7. CHAPTER SEVEN
8. CHAPTER EIGHT
9. CHAPTER NINE
10. CHAPTER TEN
11. CHAPTER ELEVEN
12. CHAPTER TWELVE
13. CHAPTER THIRTEEN
14. CHAPTER FOURTEEN

15. CHAPTER FIFTEEN
16. CHAPTER SIXTEEN
17. CHAPTER SEVENTEEN
18. CHAPTER EIGHTEEN
19. CHAPTER NINETEEN
20. CHAPTER TWENTY
21. CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE
22. CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO
23. CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE
24. CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR
25. CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE
26. CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX
27. CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN
28. CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT
29. CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE
30. CHAPTER THIRTY
31. CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE
32. CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO
33. CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE
34. CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR
35. CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE
36. CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX
37. CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN
38. CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT
39. CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE
40. CHAPTER FORTY
41. CHAPTER FORTY-ONE

42. CHAPTER FORTY-TWO
43. CHAPTER FORTY-THREE
44. CHAPTER FORTY-FOUR
45. CHAPTER FORTY-FIVE
46. EPILOGUE
47. Breaking the Girl - Prologue
48. Breaking the Girl - CHAPTER ONE
Thank You!
More Books from Eva Marks

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Dedication

If you've ever dreamed about having two dark and twisted boyfriends, and for your boyfriends to be boyfriends…
You're in for a treat.

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A Note From The Author

Voltage is a steamy, unconventional romance, containing explicit, disturbing, and graphic scenes and kinks intended for mature audiences only.

Since we'll be dealing with a sensitive topic here, it's important to mention that:

The three main characters are all consenting adults in their twenties and forties.

Killian (the stepdad), hasn't even had feelings for Carter, his stepson, until he was twenty-two.

And there's absolutely no cheating whatsoever.

There is, however, a lot of kinky fuckery going on.

And no, you will never look at a pocket knife the same way again.

You've been warned.

And now, for the themes, kinks and other fun trigger and content warnings:

The hotel (Voltage) was inspired by John Wick's hotel, The Continental (meaning lots of crime life), the FMC and stepson were lightly inspired by the Joker and Harley Quinn (if you're looking for unhinged characters–they are it)

Spitting

Snowballing

Praise and degradation

Somnophilia

Voyeurism

Self pleasuring
Knife play
Blood play
Branding (one of the MMCs carves a letter into her skin with her consent)
Primal play
They both go in one of her holes (DVP)
Violence and gore (detailed and disturbing)
Her parents are assholes (they really are)
The stepson’s mother died early on (no *dead wife trope*–the stepdad rescued them from living on the streets, but there was no romance between them).
This is an MMF romance between as stepfather, stepson and the stepson's girlfriend. Meaning everyone loves on everyone HEA guaranteed. No cheating.

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Playlist

The Bad Touch – Bloodhound Gang
Problem – Natalia Kills
Mad Hatter – Melanie Martinez
Crazy – Gnarls Barkley
Joker – Rory Webley
Holy Ghost – Ely Eira
Breathe – The Prodigy
Generator – Foo Fighters
Paranoid – Megadeth

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CHAPTER ONE

Amara

Carter Steele's pierced cock and charming smirk won't work on me. Not tonight.

Nor will his sweet words. Or how he'll sit and force me to tell him about my day. His attentiveness won't save him this time.

Biting and cuddling me or telling me I'm his precious woman will do nothing to weaken my resolve.

He's staying late at work. Again. Has a last-minute meeting at Voltage, the hotel he and his stepdad own together.

Meaning he's late to see *me*.

He should've been here by now. It's late and traffic is light.

I sigh, pacing back and forth on the floor of my apartment.

I'm not being fair. I know.

Carter is perfect. Other than being late, he's a dream come to life.

The man fucks me like he's on a mission to break my bed. His dirty talk is a love language. His hugs and the way he'd never cheat on me.

He's the fucking best.

It's just that I miss him. Here in my apartment, alone, I miss my man so damn much.

I stare at my reflection in the mirror. My chocolate brown eyes stare back at me. Taunting me. Telling me I was full of shit just a second ago.

Ugh. They're right, the fuckers. I'm not fooling anyone, least of all myself. I'll let him in. I've been waiting for his hugs ever since I woke up alone this morning.

A sudden smirk tugs at my lips. The smirk doesn't belong to me. It's my reflection's. Little annoying brat.

You're letting him in. You'll forgive this tiny flaw in his character. Otherwise, why did you leave the door open for him?

I tug on my long blonde locks, reveling in how my face twists in pain.

You're not smiling anymore, are you?

When I pull harder, I see the pain in her eyes. Better.

And worse. Now I think of Carter pulling on my hair, and I love it when he does that.

Oh, what the hell. Yes, I'll let him in. I'll forgive him.

After that, the rest of the night will probably be pure bliss.

It always is.

He'll throw a wicked smirk my way. Slam the door to the apartment behind him. Shoot a short apology before pouncing on me.

I'll have no choice but to walk backward.

His predatorial prowl and gray eyes will make me soak through my thong. His broad, six-three frame will cast a scary shadow over me until I'm pinned to the wall.

The bulge in his black, tailor-made suit pants that match his thick black hair will rip my resolve into shreds.

He'll open his sexy, annoying mouth again, and that'll be the end of me.

Strip. Kneel. Bend over. Spread those gorgeous legs for me, pet.

Game over.

Sighing, I continue my pacing. He's not being intentionally disrespectful. He works long hours and sometimes problems arise at the hotel. It's just how it is. He did text me earlier. Every single time he makes sure I remember he wishes he could have been here on time.

Problem is, I'm a greedy girl. That's why he's been using sex, late-night talks, and soft hugs to pacify me for the past six months we've been dating.

And I let him. Not my proudest feminist moment, but fuck it. He's worth it.

I walk through the tiny apartment, putting things in place.

He's worth everything. Despite being the youngest man I've ever dated—still older than me, though, at twenty-five-year-old, three years older than me, but still—he's without a doubt the most mature, put-together person ever. We haven't put a label on our relationship, but he always gives me this forever feeling.

He’s also funny. So funny in that unhinged kind of way of his.

Butterflies fly in my stomach as I remember his crazy, adorable quirks.

Fuck, I miss my muffin.

Swiping my phone from the glass table in the living room, I smile at his texts from the last month.

One of them is a selfie of us. It’s from the night he broke into my apartment while I slept. I’m naked in the photo and so is he. He wanted both of us naked and he took it.

Three other photos are dick pics from another day. He snapped them while he was in my bathroom after he came on the toilet seat, and the text attached to it says: *Had a quick lunch break, thought of you, A.*

The next is of my pillow from one afternoon that he broke into my apartment. *Don’t change the sheets. Sleep on my dried cum. Tonight, I’ll come back to see if you’ve been a good girl.*

A smirk curves up my lips. These last four photos were taken while I was working. When only one floor separated us. I was watering the plants in my flower shop, Carnations, and he was here, leaving me pieces of him.

Cutie.

My plan works. My annoyance is no more. I don’t mind him being late. My sweet, psychotic, dominant man.

Giggling to myself like a girl with a school crush, I realize how nutty I must look to the outside world. I usually am, I’m aware. It’s why I bite the inside of my cheek when attending the few walk-ins that visit my shop or the big businesses I work with.

Carter makes it hard not to be territorial over him.

Although when it’s his stepdad looking at him, I don’t really mind.

No. Forget that. I won’t go there. Can’t go there.

“Last-minute tidying up,” I chime to the empty apartment as I keep fixing it.

Talking to myself and cleaning up is a surefire way to get the rest of these pesky, dirty thoughts out of my head. So, I place my phone on the kitchen counter, wash my coffee mug, and leave it out to dry.

Next, my eyes sweep over the living room of my small one bedroom. There are no crumbs scattered on the small, brown rug. No clothes on the gray, worn-out couch that I’ve forgotten to throw into the hamper. No dust on the old TV set, either.

“What do we have here?” I eye the flower vase on my coffee table. “Sneaky dust,” I chide. I had to throw away the old flowers—my poor babies died this morning—and totally forgot to bring new ones up here.

Quickly, I wash the vase and leave it to dry on the kitchen counter next to the mug.

When I step into my tiny bedroom, I find the bed made and the dresser’s drawers closed.

Spotless.

As is my outfit choice. I run my hands over the cream-colored oversized cardigan I have over a white tank top and look down at my dark blue jeans. No creases. Perfect.

It’s as good an outfit as any for another date of drinking coffee and making out. Carter’s always so comfortable chilling under the Brooklyn Bridge or in my living room in one of his many tailor-made suits.

Despite his wealth, he has never asked me out to a restaurant or a bar. He doesn’t need flashy things. He only has eyes for me.

And he’ll be here soon. He’s late, but my man is coming.

Content and excited at the prospect of having my claws on him, I break into a little dance as I hum “The Bad Touch” by Bloodhound Gang.

My high-heeled black ankle boots go *tap*, *tap*, *tap* on the floor as I sing and make my way to the kitchen. With nothing left to do, I check my phone again for any new messages from Carter. Nothing but the last message that came in almost an hour ago.

Carter: *I’m so sorry, pet. I fucking hate that I have to be late instead of being there with you. Biting on your neck. Marking every inch of you. Making you cry like the good girl you are. But I will. Soon. That’s a motherfucking promise.*

I remind myself this is the life of the man who runs one of the most luxurious five-star hotels in Manhattan with a demanding stepdad like Killian Murdock. I’m aware of how busy the place is—after all, that’s where I met my Carter.

Asking him to change is out of the question. Carnations is my baby. Voltage has been his, ever since he turned eighteen.

Carter’s mom passed away when he was a baby. He has no one but Killian, and I won’t put myself between them.

Sure, sometimes they pin each other with mysterious gazes. Sometimes, Carter is even okay with his stoic stepdad giving me dark glares. I always

shudder at that. Carter forever smirks when it happens.

Noises from the kitchen cut into my dangerous thoughts.

Someone's picking the lock.

Carter.

He's out there, about to get me hot and bothered. Seconds from making me desperate for his special brand of crazy.

Yes, sir.

Totally aroused and one hundred percent ready, I let him play his little game. I don't open the door for him, traipsing silently on my heels to take my place in the center of the living room.

I fill my lungs, ready to scream and play the victim while he fakes breaking into my apartment.

Maybe role-playing a rape scene. Maybe—

What the fuck?

I expected my depraved, hurricane of a man to barge in here.

I expected hot sex.

This isn't it. This doesn't come fucking close.

"You're not Carter," I growl at the man in the doorway.

Crying out for help would be the smart thing, despite my only neighbor being at work. I should run and lock myself in my bedroom.

Anything to save myself from the six-foot, muscular blond assailant holding me at gunpoint.

Melina, my sensible, sane sister, would do that.

I'm anything but sensible. My family made sure to throw that fact in my face enough times.

Now, I'm just living up to it.

"I said"—I huff—"you're not Carter."

"No, I'm not, you dumb bitch." The fucker makes himself at home, taking a step toward me.

Another one.

Adrenaline races through my veins. I stomp my foot and put my hands on my hips instead of backing up to the opposite wall, ready to unleash my anger.

I've never been too good at the flight part. Much to my parents' dismay, I'm a fight girl through and through.

"Your money." The man in black shuts the door behind him, edging closer. No more than three feet separates us. "Hand it over."

My eyebrows knit. My lips curl in a snarl. I don't budge.

This wasn't supposed to be like this. This man is ruining *everything*.

"You better go. My boyfriend"—*jerk here doesn't have to know we haven't put a stamp on our relationship*—"will be here any minute. He'll kick your fucking ass, you ass."

The double use of the word *ass* doesn't go unnoticed by me. Too bad it won't get my ass any action. By my muffin.

My God, why am I thinking about sex right now?

Carter, you freak. You broke me.

"The black suit guy?" The ugly creep raises an eyebrow.

When I glare at him, mouth agape, he chuckles. Psycho.

"We both know he won't get here until much later. So tell me, Amara Carmichael, owner of Carnations." He eliminates the distance between us, looming over me. "Where. Is. The. Cash? And don't you dare scream. Unless you want a bullet in your pretty head, that is."

The reality of my situation dawns on me.

He's been planning this. Stalking me. Counting on Carter being late.

He's not wrong, either. Carter *will* be here later.

Until then, I have myself to rely on.

Myself, and my pissed-as-fuck mood.

But no vase.

Jesus, of all the days, this is the one I had to choose to wash it? It could've become handy in knocking this guy out.

I'll have to think of something else. And I do.

I bet he doesn't believe a little florist like me could fight back.

I'm smaller than him. A ton more unhinged, too.

Fuck the barrel of the gun aimed straight between my eyes. My hands ball into fists. My muscles strain, begging to be put to use.

Because this isn't just about this shithead anymore. This isn't about the wild sex I won't be having. Or Carter being late.

While I don't have money stashed anywhere in the apartment, I have my grandmother's diamond hairpin. She was the only family member who showed me kindness. The only relative to ever love me.

I'll fight this burglar to the death.

"There's nothing here for you," I lie, giving him a furious glare. Hoping he doesn't see the truth in my eyes. "Since you're a fucking stalker, you

have to know that. You know I deposit my revenues in the bank every day after work or send my employee to do that."

"I know." He doesn't seem deterred. *Why?*

There's no time to contemplate. Not a second when he presses the gun to my forehead. I smell the metal and gunpowder.

My heart hammers louder in my chest. It pushes against my ribs, almost breaking them.

That sensible girl I mentioned before, Melina? She would've been terrified.

I should take lessons from her.

Too bad we're not talking.

"So what does that tell you, genius?" In what can only be described as batshit crazy, I poke the burglar's chest. He really is a muscular motherfucker. "Get lost. You're wasting your time and mine."

"There has to be something." He lowers his face, and I smell sausage on his breath. *Gross.* "I did some digging. Your parents are wealthy, Amara. Tell me where you keep the money and you'll get to live another day."

"Hey, idiot." I seethe, leaning forward. The barrel of the gun digs into my head, painful and lethal. I don't cower, though. "Did you miss the part where my parents and I weren't talking when you spied on me? When was the last time I've been photographed with them? With my sister? Huh? Jesus, you're as dumb as you look. All muscle and no brain."

His forehead creases in thought. I jump on the opportunity. "I told you there's nothing here. Get the fuck out."

"I don't buy it." The creases on his forehead smooth over. His eyes are no longer lost. "The hard way it is, bitch."

One moment, my forehead burns with the metal pressed to it. The other, I watch the stalking thief raise the gun high up above me.

The door opens just then. My eyes find the much taller and stronger man standing there.

My man, filling the doorway.

Carter dons a black suit as always. His black hair is styled in a beautiful mess. His gray eyes breathe fire and violence.

He's rage in its purest form.

But I don't get to call for him.

I don't get to say another word.

The burglar pistol-whips me. Strikes me right over my temple.

The world turns black around me until I can’t see my apartment anymore. Lights out. Goodbye, world.

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CHAPTER TWO

Carter

That fucking cocksucker.

Think he can mess with my girl? Call her a bitch?

Pistol-fucking-whip her?

I'd laugh at his audacity.

Except I'm way too enraged. Way too furious.

I'm goddamn blinded by my wrath. The red I'm seeing isn't a fucked-up shade of pink.

The crimson red blaring behind my eyes is the color of fire. Of violence. Of bloodshed. Getting redder by the second.

Watching Amara, *my pet*, falling in slow motion to the floor does that to me.

Her sweet yet crazy brown eyes hide behind her eyelids. Then her body hits the edge of her coffee table, making a noise I never want to hear again in my entire life.

Crack, followed by a thud as she hits the rug.

I don't leap to save her from the crash. She's a tough cookie, this one.

I have more important things to tend to.

I'm sure she'd want me to do the same. Well, I can't imagine she'd want what I'm about to give him. Amara's a little on the wild side, but blood and spilling guts and killing a person?

She could break up with me for ending someone's life.

What she doesn't know won't hurt her. Clearly, I'm not talking about cheating. There's no one else but her. No one else but the man who likes her

and me.

No. There's no one else.

I'll have to act before she wakes up.

The lowlife who still has the nerve to stare down my pet doesn't hear me prowling behind him. I bet the fucker's hard from hurting her.

His erection won't last long.

Nor will his life.

Fuck handing him over to the police.

First, if they come, I'll never know who sent him—if someone sent him.

Second, calling the cops is a chicken-shit move. In my world, those who seem weak—those who don't attack first—get hurt.

Sometimes, they even lose their lives.

And I've never been one to be weak or hesitant.

My stepfather—Killian, since I stopped calling him Dad ages ago—knows that. Our hotel members know that.

That's why I'm an equal parts partner in managing Voltage. This isn't because of the underlying, unspoken tension between my stepdad and me. He didn't give me half of what's his because he looks at me *that way*. Because I had too before Amara came along.

This also isn't Killian pitying the newborn of the homeless woman he helped save years ago. He pitied my mother, sure. Killian was eighteen when he took us into his home. Couldn't stand the sight of a woman and her baby curled up, defenseless, in a dark, filthy corner in the streets of New York.

As the right hand of one of the notorious consiglieri of the underworld, Eduardo, Killian had the means to help us. And so he did. He didn't have to love my mom to marry her and adopt me. He was fueled by a sense of justice, and so he did just that.

But I'm not that baby anymore. Killian made me his partner because I'm family *and* because I've earned it.

His ruthless partner in literal crime.

The perfect man for the job of avenging Amara.

In three…

I sneak up behind the burglar. My fingers curl around the handle of the pocket knife I carry in my suit jacket everywhere. Cyclone is its name. That's right. I fucking named it. I'm nothing if not a professional.

Two…

The handle feels warm in my palm. The blade shines beneath the fluorescent lights when I unfold it.

One…

My rage is a roar as I watch the fucker leaning in to grab my pet's breast.

My breast.

Zero.

In a flash, I stab the guy in the back of the neck. The small, sharp blade goes right through. I smirk at how it sinks in so easily. The motherfucker's flesh is like butter for my sharpened Cyclone.

"Ahhh!" the man screams, reaching to his nape.

Trying to grab a hold of my knife.

"Not in this lifetime." With one hand on his slimy shoulder, I pull Cyclone out of him.

Blood spurts out of the piece of shit before me, running inside his shirt.

Useless sack of shit that he is, he screams louder.

Amara sighs in the background. Her eyes are closed, but she sighs.

She's alive, thank fuck.

Fortunately, Amara's only neighbor, Sookie, works at a strip club. She's far, far away. Won't be here to hear his pathetic whining. Won't call anyone over.

Yeah, we own a lot of cops and detectives. But there's always the chance of a straight cop showing up.

I don't plan on letting anyone spoil my fun. Or my interrogation.

His screams are louder when I stab him again in the same spot. The second time around, I'm far less merciful.

And I don't stop there. I slide my knife lower between his shoulder blades.

My blade slices through the man's shirt, exposing his pimpled back. I don't gag—hardly ever do. I enjoy the sight of his blood so goddamn much.

His spine doesn't get hurt in the process, obviously. Gotta keep the anonymous bastard awake and able to answer my questions.

He still screeches like the miserable loser he is. And I smile. My smirk widens into my signature, psychotic grin as I take my revenge.

That is until I reach his lower back. Out of fucking nowhere, the man turns quiet.

"I'm not done," I growl.

Other than his labored breaths, he says nothing.

“Goddammit.” In a dumb, uncharacteristic move, I release my hold on him to lean over and check if his eyes are open.

Of course, he has to go and lose his balance. He’s about to topple over onto the floor. His dead weight will land right on top of Amara. He’ll crush my baby.

I’ll never let that happen. As fast as humanly possible, I slip my pocket knife out of him while renewing my grip on his shoulder. I loop the other arm around the stranger’s midriff, hauling him to my front.

“You’re done hurting her, asshole,” I hiss in his ear.

“Fuck off,” he grits out, his voice laced with agony.

I’m not in a generous mood, so I deliver more pain. My dress shoe connects to the side of his ankle, twisting and crushing it beneath my weight.

His mouth resumes his useless screams.

“You’re going to wake my sweet girl over here.” I slam my hand on his repulsive mouth. “I can’t have her witness our little game.”

Can’t allow her a glimpse into my world. I fell for Amara’s unhinged side first. An adorable, crazy woman that’s so much like me. The only girl who didn’t flinch at my psycho smile that sends most people running for their lives.

But again, I’m sure that even my firecracker must have her limits.

Over the last six months, Amara Grace Carmichael hijacked my heart. She has no idea, but she has. She and Killian take up the entire space in my rotten chest, and I won’t survive either of them leaving me.

I won’t.

Amara sells flowers for a living, for fuck’s sake. The furthest thing from the violence that bleeds into every part of my life.

The members of our hotel—the only ones who get to stay there—are nothing but criminals and lowlifes. Hitmen, drug dealers, serial killers, money launderers, politicians, and so forth. Then there’s everyone who works for them such as their lawyers and accountants.

Amara knows shady people check in there. She just doesn’t know it’s what our operations are based on.

The burglar mumbles against my palm. He’s more awake than before. Good. I need him to spill who he works for in case he came here to hurt me through Amara.

He’ll scream the second I let go.

Years of hurting people have turned me into a creative, resourceful monster.

One second, I remove my hand from his mouth. Next, I slip my pocket knife into his gaping hole. I've been meaning to sink the blade into his palate. Unfortunately, for both of us, dipshit moved and the blade sliced into his tongue.

Blood gushes on my wrist, hot and thick.

Jesus, fucking tongues. Once they start bleeding, you can't stop them.

Normally, I wouldn't give two shits about some dick bleeding out. But he's moments from bleeding on top of Amara and her rug. So far, his back has bled onto the hardwood floor and my clothes, so that's fine. Easy to clean up.

Rugs or her body? Not so much.

"Come on, buddy." I drag him toward the doorway, careful with the knife buried in his tongue. "Slow and steady."

An inch to the left or the right, and he'll bleed out before I get to interrogate him. That can't happen. I have to find out what this guy's doing here. Who sent him. Who I have to kill. Or if he's a free agent.

Whatever it is, I have to find out. Have to rule out every other option before I kill him.

If he's here to hurt me through Amara, I have to know.

I've been so careful. Since the moment Amara and I started dating, I've been on edge. Constantly vigilant. Working hard on hiding the fact that we're dating for her sake. We've been staying in or hanging out where we won't stand out. I've been buying her coffee—fucking coffee—when all I've ever wanted was to pamper the shit out of my princess.

I could've too, if not for scumbags who might see my feelings for her as a weakness. Killian and I are the classic description of filthy rich. The rates we charge for a hotel membership and our other services line our pockets, and then some.

Still, I can't spoil Amara. Because of the company I keep.

One of these days, I'll tell her who and what I am. Then, she'll be aware of the dangers and I'll have someone on her all the fucking time. Watching her, tailing her, protecting her. For the time being, it's my secret. Mainly due to the fact I don't want her to run off screaming. I just don't know if she's ready to see that side of me yet.

So I hide the truth. Hide her.

At least I thought I had.

Time to find out.

“As I mentioned…” When we reach the door, I use one hand to slam it shut and lean my weight against it, taking the big fella with me. “You won’t be troubling my Amara anymore.”

He grunts, splattering blood over the front of his shirt. It hangs loose down his shoulders, exposing the pimples on his collarbone.

“Game time is over.” The view of Amara lying there on the floor infuriates me. Snaps me back to the present moment, to why I’m doing this. “Who sent you?”

“*Grgrgrgrgr.*” More blood spurts instead of answers.

Fuck, I should’ve aimed better.

Since his speaking abilities have been impaired, I don’t get the answers I need. He growls, his eyes searching the room frantically for something or someone to save him.

Yeah, right.

I’m fighting against the rage consuming me. At him. At myself. At how I’m doing this instead of kissing Amara and waking her up with my dick in her ass. Fighting and losing.

“Who?” I remove my hand, the blade pulling out slowly from his tongue. I’m used to the scent of copper. Don’t mind it. “You’ve reached the end of the road, you miserable piece of shit. Better give up whoever sent you. Maybe the bouncer in heaven will end up letting you in, you know? Good intentions and all that.”

His sliced tongue rests on top of his bottom lip. Blood, blood, blood everywhere.

He gazes up and to the side, at me. Withholding the answers.

“Little piggy likes being punished.” In goes the knife again, straight to his chest. “Who?”

He mumbles some incoherent shit. Finally, something that doesn’t sound like *grgrgrgrgr*.

“Repeat that for me, sunshine?” To emphasize how serious I am, I twist the blade inside his chest.

“You weren’t supposed to be here this early,” he mumbles, spitting blood on my hand. At least, that’s what I gather from his broken speech.

He’s been fucking stalking her. Stalking us.

I don’t mean to be late for our dates. In fact, I hate that I do. Running our type of hotel is more than a full-time job. Asserting our control and mediating between these assholes demands almost every one of my waking and sleeping hours.

If Kill and I aren’t careful, they’ll think they can take their resentment out on us. And that can never fucking happen.

Besides, this will be the last time I don’t show up on time. Other than the fact that she’s not staying here a day longer, I’ll find a way to balance the two. She’s been too considerate. Too accepting.

She won’t have to. Never again.

I’ll prove it to her.

When she wakes up.

The asshole in my grasp, however, doesn’t deserve my sympathy.

He deserves nothing but my unrestrained wrath.

“I’m here now.” I start swaying the knife in and out of him, basically fucking his chest with Cyclone. “Here to fuck Amara. The longer my cock isn’t buried inside her, the worse I torture you. So why don’t you do us a favor and tell me who sent you?”

He’s quiet other than the spitting blood noises.

“Anyone tell you what pretty eyes you have?” The gleaming knife at his face is just the incentive he needs. “They are. They’ll make such a great trophy on my wall.”

“No one sent me.” Blood spills down his chin and shirt. Fuck, I’ll have a lot to clean up once my movers get rid of him. “No one, I found out who her parents were, and…”

Ah, yes. The bastards who want nothing to do with Amara.

He makes sense. Except I’m not sold. Maybe he’s targeting her because her parents and sister live in one of the most secure skyscrapers in the city. Maybe he’s here for Killian and me. I can’t be sure.

“Hmph.” Amara’s sweet little body stirs.

I’m going to dig into who this man is and who paid him later.

Two pairs of booted feet thump on the stairs from the hall. My movers, Shawn and Lance. Once I heard the commotion inside Amara’s apartment, I texted them my location. No extra explanation was needed. An address meant it was a sign for them to haul ass.

“You haven’t been very helpful, have you?” I don’t have time for his bullshit. “Goodbye, now.”

“Wait, don’t—”

The subtle knock on the door propels me to jam the knife deeper. I stab the burglar. Sink the knife as far as it’ll go.

“Carter, it’s us,” Shawn, the father, announces.

I drive the knife up to the bastard’s throat. “Be out in a second, honey.”

“Okay,” Lance answers, unaffected by my ecstatic tone.

Just one of the many benefits of a five-year-long working relationship with my vendors. They know me.

Back to the task at hand.

My grin widens as I slash through the guy’s muscles, tendons, and flesh.

“*Grgrgrgrgr*.”

Jesus fuck. Not that again.

“What was that, dear?” I pull the knife out and cut his throat horizontally. There’s a bump in the road, the place where I cut him vertically. From there, it’s smooth sailing. “I don’t think I quite heard you.”

“*Gr*…” is the last I hear of him.

In less than ten seconds, the room bathes in blessed silence. I reach into his pocket, pleased to find his irresponsible ass brought his wallet with him.

“Charlie Smith. Chuck, Chuck, Chuck. We’ll find out who you are later.” I press the man closer to my body as I swivel to open the door. “Trash.”

A gray-haired older man and his blond son who weighs over two hundred pounds of pure muscle wait for me there.

“All yours.” I push the lifeless body toward Shawn, standing in the doorway to hide Amara. “I hope it goes without saying, you two were never here.”

“Never.” Lance passes me one of my black suits, as per our work contract. His gaze moves to the floor and the puddle of blood at my feet. “Need help with that?”

“Nah, I’m good, thanks.”

The less people around Amara—unless they’re my stepdad—the better. Even more so considering she might stir from her forced slumber any moment now.

They start pushing the body into a floral leather bag to hide the fact they’re carrying a body. Meanwhile, I hang my suit on the door handle, stripping the evidence off my body for them to burn.

After I’m in nothing but my black briefs, I hand them over the dirty clothes. The burglar is already crammed into the body bag, and I push a few

hundred-dollar bills into Lance's hand.

Their retainer ensures they do their job. That they'll go the extra mile for us.

"Enjoy the rest of the evening." I salute them, shutting the door a second time today.

Finally, silence. No one here except Amara and me.

"Pet." Her nickname is barely a whisper on my lips as I squat down next to her. My knuckles graze her temple. It's a soft touch, unlike my rock-hard cock. "You know how I love to fuck your mouth while you're sleeping or make you come so hard that you wake up. So forgive me for this." I gesture toward the mess the asshole left behind. "I have some cleaning up to do."

I bend to brush my lips across her forehead. Sniffing her hair. Inhaling the jasmine scent of her shampoo.

"Later when you sleep at my place," I growl with a barely contained need, "I'll make it up to you. I'll pound into those plump, beautiful lips until you choke. You'd like that, wouldn't you?"

"*Hmph*," is all she gives me.

Hmph is all the consent I'll ever need.

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CHAPTER THREE

Amara

"Pet." Carter's voice pulls me out of the void. Out of the darkness.

Muffin.

My mouth's not fully functioning yet. My eyes, however, do. They flutter open, eager to obey Carter.

His familiar gray gaze is the first thing I see. Piercing, intense eyes try to burrow inside my brain.

"There you are," he whispers, though it sounds a lot like a growl.

Is he mad at me for leaving the door open? Or does he get off on my swollen area where the motherfucker hit me? He likes spanking me. He likes the marks his palm leaves on my ass. So maybe…?

But the pounding in my head doesn't feel like a night with Carter.

And I'm not feeling very playful.

I'm in pain. My left temple throbs.

My ego is bruised. My sense of safety in my own apartment is nonexistent.

This isn't my first time getting beaten up. Keeping my mouth shut has never been my thing. Meaning I never fit in any of the private schools my parents sent me to. Who could've guessed that the punishment for being a weirdo is getting bullied?

So, yeah. I had my hair tugged. The mean girls kicked my ribs sometimes. I stumbled over *accidentally* extended legs in the hall more times than I'd like to admit.

I'm no stranger to pain. I embrace it.

Thing is, if Carter were here, none of this would've happened. If Carter wouldn't have made being late a habit, the freaking stalker wouldn't have dared to break in here.

Worst thing, though? Our night is ruined.

Instead of fucking like rabbits, I'm lying on my couch. My head is in Carter's lap, and he's not pinching my nipples.

Annoying.

Sensing my peaking anger, Carter flips his palm, soothing the wounded area one stroke after the other. A strand of his short, straight hair falls on his creased forehead as he gazes down at me.

He doesn't smooth it back, the tiny imperfection in his otherwise immaculately styled hair.

"I'm sorry, A." There's no mesmerizing grin splayed on his face. No sweet-talking his way back in my good graces.

I don't want to be mad at him. I'm not mad at him. I wish I could taunt him—our banter is everything—but I have nothing.

Ugh. Great, now I'm annoyed from being annoyed.

"What am I going to do with you, muffin?"

On the outside, Carter is edgy and dark. On the inside, he's my cutie pie. It's one of the many reasons I could never stay mad at him. And he loves the nickname.

Less so today.

His expression turns sterner than before. His frown is deep, and he scowls at me.

"That bad?" I ask. Carter's never mad at me. It has to be the bruises. Right?

"Pet, I apologized for being late. I'll apologize a million times more. Just say the word and I'll do it. Whatever will make you feel better, anything at all. I fucking lo—Fuck, just tell me." His voice is hoarse, his determination as thick as his cock and endless as the ocean. He means business. "I'll do anything, anything other than walk away. You and me, we're forever. Breaking up is not an option for you. Fucking never. You're mine, have I made myself clear?"

I blink a few times. Then my lips curve up.

He misunderstood me. I wanted to play, and my possessive, obsessed guy heard something else entirely.

What a sexy red flag he is. All my life I've been warned against men like Carter, and yet here I am, smiling so hard my cheeks hurt.

"As if I'd ever leave you." The words scratch my throat.

Fuck, being knocked out for who knows how long really did a number on me.

I cough, causing Carter to jump into action. He straightens me into a sitting position, pressing me to his side while reaching for my coffee table, getting me water.

Where's the other dude?

After I take a sip, I ask, "You slept here?"

"Sleep? Why would I sleep here?" His resolute expression morphs into that of confusion. I can see the second he understands my question. "No, baby. It's only been an hour since the…"

Since the attack.

Storm clouds gather over Carter's face. A low growl emanates from his chest.

Without a single warning, he grabs the glass from my hand and returns it to the table. The water sloshes with the force of Carter's rage. A couple of drops splash on the worn-out wooden top.

"That cocksucker." He doesn't let me get up to wipe the table. Carter grips my hips, manhandling me until my thighs straddle him.

A declaration of war brews behind his gray eyes. His erection beneath me is as powerful a weapon as his strong, demanding hands are.

"Did you punch him?" The pain in my temple is all but gone. My love for the violence in him takes over. "For me?"

He tilts his head, his fingers bruising my hips. My fingers lace around his neck, my hips grind, desperate for friction. I want him so bad every part of me hurts. I don't care what happened to that other man anymore.

"Pet, fuck." Carter burrows his fingers deeper into my flesh, hurting me in a delicious way. My jeans are no obstacle for my man. What Carter wants, Carter gets.

And right now, he's obsessed with delivering pain. Pain that'll make me cry out his name.

Of course, I let him have it.

"Carter," I moan.

He replies by curling his fingers around the side of my neck, using his other hand to grind me on his cock.

My gaze travels down to one of my favorite parts of his body. His arms. The sleeves of his black shirt are rolled up, his veins bulging on his muscular forearms.

“Look at me,” he orders, his groan too hot for words.

I don’t obey anyone other than Carter. And the bank. Gotta do what they say.

But mostly, in my world, Carter is my king. The only ruler.

On his command, my eyes slide up his chest, the scruff on his chin and strong nose, and land on his fierce stare. As our gazes collide, I feel his dick throbbing beneath me.

All it’ll take is a snap of my wrist, and I’ll have his cock out. Carter will do the rest by himself.

His brow furrows, head shaking slowly. “No.”

I hate and love that he can tell what I’m about to do before I do. My bottom lip juts out in a pout.

“Not until you explain what the hell *what am I supposed to do with you* means.” He jerks his hips up as an incentive.

Bastard.

“You weren’t here.” Here are some truths for him. While I still pout. “He knew you wouldn’t be here. I missed you, but it’s not it. I almost… almost…”

Shivers wrack through my body. My sass and my confidence are nowhere to be found.

The man who knocked me out could’ve done any number of things to me. We both get that, moreover since Carter gets off on me being a heavy sleeper. On my unconscious consenting. Yeah, it’s a thing. Our thing.

“Hey, hey.” He stops dry humping me. His arms slide around my back, dragging me to him, mashing to his chest with one hand on my head. “Don’t go there. I’m here. No one touches you, pet. No one. You’re mine, you hear?”

Sometimes, like this evening, I wish I was a crier. At least I would’ve stained his thousand-dollar shirt with snot and tears.

“I could’ve been raped.” I punch him. Try, that is. Carter pins me to him, locking me in place. “And you weren’t here.”

“I know, and I’m sorry.” The surrender in his tone matches the slow, amorous strokes of his hand along the curve of my back. “It won’t happen

again. No one in this whole fucking world will ever touch you. It's a fucking promise."

"How can you be so sure?"

"You trust me?" He continues to caress me while gluing me to his body. Loving and hurting me all at once.

"Yes."

"Good girl."

Soothed and comforted, I use my nails to graze his shirt. I finally notice that my eyes don't hurt because Carter has been considerate and turned off the lights and left only one lamp on.

What's that? Carter's scent carries into my nose. It's his usual sandalwood cologne. And bleach.

"Carter, why do you—"

"You're moving in with us, Amara," he cuts into my question. "Where you'll be safe. That's how I can be so sure."

My first reaction is that of complete and utter joy.

I've been head over heels crazy in love with this man, a secret I haven't told him yet. I'm not sure he's into the whole traditional feeling declaration idea. So, obviously, I'm the happiest girl ever.

"Eep!" My lips stretch into a gloriously wide smile. "For real?"

"Yes, for real."

I wiggle so hard against him that he releases his hold on me. He lets out a low, rugged laugh when I grip his face, kissing every inch of his gorgeous face from his chin to his forehead.

"We'll be roommates?" I ask, my face and his less than an inch apart.

"More like sexy partners who do—" he starts.

The potent scent of bleach bursts my pretty, pink bubble.

This time, I'm the one who doesn't let him finish. I rear back, my eyebrows knitting. "Where's the man who broke in here?"

Carter doesn't so much as blink. "He's where he should be."

Twisting my head left and right, I scan the small space of my apartment. Nothing looks out of place, nothing suggesting a struggle. I mean, I know Carter is strong as fuck—I've been benefitting from it plenty—but the other guy was huge.

Carter couldn't have just made the guy disappear. I think.

Okay, now I'm officially curious. And a little more turned on. He deserves a kiss for killing this fucker. That is if he's done it.

“Where is that exactly?”

“Out on the street, limping back to the hole he crawled out of.”

The flat tone he uses has me half convinced. Carter did have the element of surprise on his side. He could’ve tackled him, broken a bone. Something dirty and delicious.

Still, though, I need to know. “You didn’t call the police?”

“Baby.” His eyes gleam, sinister, and luring me to their depths. “I was furious when I saw him hurting you. Had to kick the motherfucker’s ass. The cops would’ve dragged me to the station with him. Away from you.”

Jesus, that’s hot. He beat a guy up for me.

My only regret is that I wasn’t awake to witness it.

“Okay.” My cheeks heat. My need is a living thing pushing against my ribs, burning my core.

Carter gauges my expression. He leans into me, his nose trailing along the curve of my neck, his lips stroking my skin.

Then the freaking smell wafts into my nose and ruins everything.

“And the bleach?” I wrinkle my nose. “What’s up with that?”

“You’re too perceptive for your own good, Amara.”

Carter massages my shoulders, going lower. His exploring fingers trace the sides of my breasts, sliding beneath my cardigan. His touch and the evil glint flashing on his face melt me into a puddle.

“I wanted him gone,” he continues, even though I’m a little stupid for him already. Carter brushes his lips against mine as he speaks. “I wanted this space wiped clean of his scent, his disgusting boot prints. It doesn’t matter that you’re moving out. This is your space. No way was I going to leave his filthy scent here.”

“Thank you.” My grip on his face tightens. The hold should hurt him, but Carter doesn’t flinch. “Holy shit. We’re actually going to…”

I trail off, suddenly remembering another important detail my brain conveniently forgot.

“No secrets, pet,” Carter coaxes.

“My landlords.” I nibble on my bottom lip, disentangling from him to look around at the space that’s been my home for the last four years. “I’ll have to tell them I want out of my lease early. I can’t afford both this place and pitching in with the bills and grocery shopping at yours. They’ll throw a fucking fit.”

“A, fuck pitching in. I’m taking care of you. Killian and I are.” Carter forces my face to his. “B, if they give you trouble, I’ll have our lawyers speak to them. Worst case, I’ll settle the lease with them. Don’t worry about it.”

“Carter, no.” My head shakes so vehemently, my brain hurts. “I wasn’t trying to get you to throw money my way. I was sharing my concerns, not asking for anything.”

“And I’m sharing my solution.” He grins, his pearly white teeth sparkling at me.

His *I dare you to defy me* face.

Do I want to? Yes? No?

No. We’ve argued enough for one evening. Maybe if I’m good, I’ll get the evening I’ve been waiting for. I’ll get him naked.

“Okay.” I chuckle to myself. My parents wouldn’t believe how easily I bend for him.

“Good girl.” His mesmerizing gray eyes don’t leave mine. “There’s more, though. Tell me what’s bothering you and I’ll fix it, pet.”

I sigh. No use in hiding my biggest concern. “Killian.”

Silence.

Shit, I shouldn’t have mentioned it.

My eyes hop across the room. Anything but this type of conversation. Cracks in the white walls. String of Pearls plants in their bronze pots that hang from the ceiling, draping so low they almost reach the floor. I really ought to do something about it before I move out of here, like maybe…

“Pet, baby.” Carter’s finger under my chin, and his firm voice demands my attention. It happens to me sometimes, and he’s never upset. He thinks it’s adorable. It’s unavoidable, that’s what it is. “What about Killian?”

Reflexively, my nose scrunches. I do that when I’m nervous. Highly inconvenient, seeing how this tell gives me away every single time around Carter.

“Talk to me.” His probing gaze confirms that yes, he didn’t miss it.

Most people fantasize about a partner or partners who understand them. Carter has perfected this ability to a fault.

I say to a fault since some truths are better kept bottled up.

There’s no man or woman I’ve ever loved harder than I love muffin. That is why I hate that I like the way his stepdad’s eyes darken when they land

on Carter. Or me. I don’t understand what that dark, chocolate gaze wants, but I’m always two seconds from asking.

Or maybe it’s nothing but a *get-out-of-my-personal-space* look.

Not like I see him that much. I hang out in their penthouse on the weekends, and they work odd hours, so I hardly ever bump into Killian. When I do, I can’t help thinking of the three of us together.

That they’d be together, and with me.

Dream on, Amara. While you’re at it, try not to fuck things up with the man you’d cut someone’s throat for.

“He won’t want me there.”

Semi-honesty for the win. Despite the tension I must be imagining, he’s hardly ever spoken to me. The rare dinners we share aren’t what you’d call awkward, they’re just quiet. So quiet.

“Pet, of course, he’ll want you to move in with us.”

“No.” I give my head a rough shake, the strands of my hair covering my eyes.

Carter brushes them back, tucking them behind my ears. “What makes you say that?”

“I feel it.”

“Elaborate.” Carter, my sweet, vicious, Carter. He doesn’t let up. Then again, when has he ever?

“His expressions when I’m around.” I bite my bottom lip, and Carter pulls the flesh out to encourage me to go on. “Frowning or glaring. Sometimes, he groans. I don’t mind.” I do. His approval is important to me. For many reasons. “It’s his home; he deserves to have his quiet space. Without me there.”

A strong, scary emotion takes over Carter’s face. Something dark and sensual. His cock jerks beneath me.

“Killian is Killian.”

The irrefutable truth. Meaning there’s only one person Killian will show his version of love to. And that’s Carter. Preferably when I’m not around to be a witness to his softer-ish side.

How am I supposed to live there? Under the roof of a man who makes me giddy and yet hates me, or at the very least, feels nothing for me?

How am I supposed to be okay with ruining their dynamic?

My bottom lip juts out in a pout, and I twirl a lock of hair around my finger.

“He likes you, A. I swear.” The sincerity in his voice has me believing him. Almost.

“His glares tell a different story.” Or like he wants to eat me until there’s nothing left. “Listen, Carter, thanks for the offer. I’ll stay here, install a better lock. You’ll have to climb through the fire escape at night instead of breaking in, but maybe you’ll learn to like it?”

Carter’s warm palms encapsulate my cheeks, dragging me to face him again.

“Amara, please.”

“Please, what, muffin?” I huff.

“He’s not like that around other people.” His thick, black brows pinch together. “You think he’s pissed at you? No, beautiful. The way he looks at you, it means… Fuck.” He holds me tighter, gray eyes drilling into me. “You really don’t see it?”

“N-no,” I say, although I’m less sure than before.

He sighs. His breath smells of peppermint and Carter. I need to put an end to this conversation. Put it off indefinitely and maul him in my living room. I wanted him, my baby. And here we are, taking a nose-dive into emotion-land.

Things have been so easy between us. He’s crazy about me. I’m stupid for him. The three of us will ignore the big-ass elephant in the room.

Easy.

“Carter, I don’t want to make a mess out of things.”

“You never do, pet.” Carter’s hands slide lower, possessive, as he grips my hips. “He likes you. Very much.”

Eek, he’s serious. “No way. He would’ve said something.”

“Doesn’t have to,” he growls. From frustration. From desire. Maybe from both. “That’s how his eyes change when he *needs*.”

Oh, no. This isn’t good. This isn’t good at all.

For Carter, not me. Carter the kid. Any number of things could’ve happened in the soundproofed penthouse. Bad things. The worst of them.

Motherfucker. I’ll kill this child molester. I’ll burn Killian until he’s nothing but ashes. Then I’ll pee on him. And worse.

No one touches my baby. No one.

“Carter, did he touch you?” I drown out the bubbling panic, smoothing my features and lowering my voice. On the inside, I’m fucking livid. “When you were a kid?”

“No, no.” Carter squares his shoulders. “Never.”

I tilt my head, studying his expression.

What the fuck? He seems disappointed.

Maybe the three of us don’t have to be a mess?

Then again… I have questions.

“Okay. So, let me get this straight.” My fingers run along the planes of his chest. “This… It’s okay with you?”

He frowns, and it takes everything in me not to bite his bottom lip. “Why wouldn’t I be?”

Making sense of this new situation gets trickier by the second.

“Hmm, you punched Bradley, from the bodega down the street, last month. Remember? When he asked me if I wanted a bag for my candy.”

Poor Bradley. Carter didn’t stop at punching him in the face. He then demanded that Bradley hand over his security tapes. Warned him against telling anyone about what transpired that evening.

It was hot. So fucking hot.

Still, I felt kind of bad that Bradley hasn’t spoken to me since.

“He could’ve asked *me*.” The muscles beneath his shirt flex. “He was hitting on you while I had my arm around you. He didn’t respect you. Didn’t respect me. He had it coming.”

I quirk an eyebrow.

“Bradley isn’t Killian.” Another truth I can’t refute. “You’re moving in. End of story.”

Carter plasters a scorching kiss on my lips, ending our discussion. For now.

My body responds to his demanding fingers, bending to Carter’s will. He pushes me back to the couch until I’m lying on it. My zipper is yanked down, and Carter snarls as if he’s offended it’s there in the first place.

My big, strong man lifts my hips while tugging my jeans and thong down my ass.

He pins me with a dark glare once I’m naked from my waist down, towering over me. “I’m going to lick your pretty pussy, Amara. I dare you to tell me no.”

I open my legs wider. “Never.”

“Jesus, my horny little pet is drenched for me. Or is it because I told you Killian’s dying to fuck your pretty hole?” He pushes two fingers inside me,

and I cry out his name. “Yeah, that’s right. Scream for me, baby. Tell me how much you want me to suck your clit.”

Images of his father materializing beside him filter into my vision.

About having not one pair of hands digging into the flesh of my thighs, but two.

Not one tongue lapping on my pussy.

Two of them.

“Please.”

“More,” he urges, his breath tickling the sensitive, wet, most desperate part of me. “Fucking beg.”

I scream.

“Beg, Amara. Use your fucking words.” Two fingers turn to three, curling, probing, maddening. “Then I’ll give you what you need. I’ll let you come on my face.”

“I am begging.” I sound absolutely feral, downright insane. That’s what he does to me. “Please make me come. Pretty, pretty please.”

He lowers his mouth to the apex between my thighs. He pinches and twists my nipple through my cardigan. Then tugs at the piercing on the other one.

I scream again, scratching the cushions. I’m not allowed to grab onto my dominant man’s hair no matter how I’m itching for it.

My back arches, my lips mumbling *Please* and *Carter* over and over as my head thrashes.

“That’s it.” He lifts his head, winking at me. “That’s my girl.”

When he closes his lips on my clit, I die and go to heaven. A force—Carter’s force—barrels into me, sucking the air out of my lungs in one harsh blow.

I don’t come, eagerly waiting for his permission. I don’t have to, but I love it. Love him telling me what to do.

He tugs harder on my nipple piercing. The pain sends another rippling pleasure to course through me. His tongue licks, his fingers are ruthless, stabbing into me. Coaxing an orgasm out of me.

“Stop, stop. I can’t take it anymore.” Tension builds inside me, burning through me. “I’m going to come, please tell me it’s okay.”

“Are you begging?”

My head shoots up to meet his beautiful, ravenous eyes.

All I can do is nod.

“Then yes, come for me.” He resumes finger-fucking me hard and fast. “Show me how much you love me eating you out, Amara.”

This time, he sucks my clit without a shred of mercy. It hurts and it torments. And it’s the best orgasm I’ve had in my entire life.

The whole neighborhood can hear me begging for mercy.

“Good girl,” he praises between soft kisses and languorous laps of his tongue. “That’s my good girl.”

I’m too dumbfounded for words. So I watch him, just watch him when he pulls his cock out. My lips part, hungry for the thick dick he’s stroking. To suck off his precum. To swirl my tongue around his piercing.

“Stay where you are, Amara.” Carter bites on his bottom lip, using my wetness as lube. “Stay right there —*fuck*—so I can come on this beautiful pussy.”

I do, lifting my cardigan to give him a view of my nipple ring that he loves so much.

“Beautiful,” he groans, fucking his fist faster while aiming at my pussy. “So fucking beautiful. Tell me you’re hungry for my cum.”

“I am.” I play with my piercing, and a few minutes later, he finishes on my pussy.

His depravity doesn’t end there. He bends to my sex, licking his semen off me, and climbs up my body. Carter’s thumb pushes down my lip, and he spits his cum into my mouth.

“Swallow.” His order is an easy one to follow.

I love the taste of his cum.

“Good girl.”

Carter gets a towel from the bathroom, cleaning me up. Then he fixes my clothes back in place, helps me off the couch, and rakes his fingers through my tangled hair.

“No more arguing,” he murmurs against my lips. “Unless you want this to be your last orgasm in a very long while.”

“Carter, no.”

“So go pack.” He pauses, tilting his head. “Don’t give me that look. If this is about watering the plants, you’ll do that. You work in the shop downstairs, remember?”

My head bobs with every vehement nod.

His eyes are dark and fierce and absolutely gorgeous. “Go, then. I’m not asking again.”

I don’t walk to pack my shit.
I run.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Killian

"Please, Killian." The pathetic accountant grabs his ribs, a meek attempt at shielding himself from my shoe. "Stop, it hurts."

"It's Mr. Murdock to you," I growl from over him, rolling the sleeves of my black dress shirt up my forearm. "We're not friends."

Three kicks to his lower abdomen earn me more of Preston's screams. Tears drip on the dark, hardwood floors. I think I see snot.

Good thing I soundproofed the backroom of my office when I built the place. Just like I did with my home.

No sounds coming in. No ear-piercing screams going out.

The guests won't be disturbed by the obnoxious howling. They're either killing people on a daily basis or have grown accustomed to being around worse.

Still, I prefer our hotel runs as quietly and as smoothly as possible.

Carter and I have survived by keeping it that way.

For years, Voltage has been a safe place for the proverbial shit stain on the white underwear of this world.

Our members are filthy, and we give them a safe haven. The cops don't come near the six-story building in downtown Manhattan. No one does.

But we do more than keep them safe. With years of experience under my belt and our connections, Carter and I help these useless fucks by being their trusted mediators.

That's how we maintain the peace around here.

Unless, of course, they break our rules.

Rule number one is—if you're not a member, you better not show up here unannounced. A vetted member has to come to us first. Our private detectives prepare us a thick, nice folder on them.

Only once we have incriminating material on them and make sure they're not rapists or pedophiles—even the underworld has standards—do we invite them here.

Then there's rule number two. While on hotel turf, no one's allowed to kill, steal, hurt, and/or spy on any other members, me or Carter, nor our hotel staff and suppliers.

That's it.

Those who don't abide by the rules…

Let's just say, they either have a world of pain coming their way. From there, it's up to Carter's and my discretion whether they keep feeling anything at all, period.

Two rules.

Two.

You'd think these two should be easy enough to memorize, right?

Wrong.

"Please," Preston whimpers.

A plea I ignore.

My eyes rake over the dark mahogany wood panels lining the walls of the torture room beneath our office. From there, I trail my gaze over the one piece of furniture on the back wall—the pristine white dresser where our torturing devices lie.

I won't be using any of them on Mr. Richards tonight, though. They're reserved for those who actually have tolerance.

This weak, slobbering idiot would go into shock and die in a second. I don't want him dead. His biggest client—Christopher Boroughs, a known hitman—is one we appreciate here at the hotel. Thanks to him, the asshole's life will be spared.

"I'm begging you." There it is, more snot running down his top lip.

Repulsive.

"Jesus fuck. Grow a fucking pair, Preston." I cross my arms over my chest, staring right through him. Showing him exactly what he means to me. Nothing.

"I haven't brought anyone else here." He spits while he talks. Fucking embarrassment. "I swear on my mother's life."

“You have to understand something. I have nowhere else better to be other than here. Nothing better to do than make you bleed and break your bones.” I crouch next to the incompetent piece of shit, placing my hands on my knees. “You, on the other hand, would like to leave this room. In one piece, I’d imagine.”

His blue eyes widen, his chin quivering. “Y-yes, Mr. Murdock, but I—”

“No more begging,” I cut him off, pulling on his blond hair before releasing him to the floor.

His head makes a loud thudding sound. Preston sheds a tear. Ugh, some people here are plain losers.

“You opened your mouth, Preston. I don’t give a fuck that it was your brother-in-law you brought over here. Could’ve been the pope for all I care. You broke rule number one.” I grab his chin, forcing his eyes on mine. “That means we have a problem here. I can’t trust you not to spring other surprise visitors on us anymore. So, I’ll ask this one more time and you better give me the answer I need. Who. Else. Have. You. Told?”

“No one.”

I release him. Momentarily. My fist connects with his chin, and he cries out in agony. He’ll have a nasty bruise in the morning. Serves him fucking right.

“I’ll find out, you have my word,” I growl. “When I do, you can count on one thing. And that’s me not being as understanding as I am right now.”

He flinches, thinking another blow is coming his way. Each and every one of the men and women I’ve put in this position does.

We have nothing to fear. We don’t show mercy to anyone who fucks with us.

Carter and I *own* them.

They know we do. They’ve heard the rumors. We look the part of the grim reapers, too.

To a stranger, we couldn’t have been any more different, Carter and me. Carter’s hair is black, while mine is sandy blond. His eyes are gray, while mine are a dark shade of brown. Carter tends to smile—his psycho grin, but still. I keep my expression stern.

Those who look closer see something that terrifies them.

Neither of us will lose sleep over killing people. Not a fucking wink. While it’s not our job to do that, we won’t hesitate.

Anything to keep the peace and our hold of power.

Nevertheless, these people are fucking savages. No wonder Carter refuses to go public with his and Amara's relationship. Why he treats the little florist like any other supplier whenever she does deliveries to our hotel.

"No one," Preston repeats.

His ribs are cracked—heard that happen an hour ago. A mean bruise starts swelling on his cheek. He's drooling and crying.

I reach the disappointing conclusion that this is over. More blows to this pathetic bag of bones will get me nowhere.

Had Carter been here, he would've continued. Would've kicked him for the heck of it.

Playing with his metaphorical food is my stepson's thing. He smiles wide when beating someone up. Gets off on watching our unruly members beg for their lives.

A smirk stretches across my lips at the memories.

But Carter's not here. There's not a hint of his sandalwood cologne in the room. He's not around to make fun of Preston's misery.

That shuts down any hint of amusement. I suck in a long breath through my nose, inhaling the stench of Preston's fear. Smelling this miserable accountant's blood on my knuckles.

"You have to believe me, please," the pathetic lowlife begs, despite my order. "I told you, Jake came from Chicago and he needed a place for his meetings. I didn't think it would be such a big deal."

Carter would've enjoyed this next part.

BAM!

A new layer of blood coats my knuckles when my fist meets Preston's nose.

Yes, Carter would've definitely loved that. The sound of bone cracking. The coppery scent that follows. The miserable howls of pain. His desire for blood and inflicting pain never fails to get my cock inappropriately hard.

He belongs to Amara.

It's the worst moment to think of either of them. I should be happy they're together tonight and stop complaining, even in my own head. Besides, he stayed longer than he should've. Was late to meet her like he was late to their Valentine's Day dinner.

Because of me.

They're great together. But if I could only be with them—

No, I shake my head. *Never*.

I haven’t loved another man or woman in my life. Not even Joelle Steele, Carter’s mom. She was a good woman, like Amara. Kind and funny. Taking care of her son was the first and last good deed I’ve ever done. I just didn’t love her.

Carter, however, loves Amara. Won’t admit to it, but he does. And I, in my own way, love them both.

They deserve to be happy.

Without me.

Shut up.

“Ask Christopher, he’ll vouch for me.” Preston’s lame scream sucks me back into the present moment. “You know he monitors my every move.”

It’s my business to know that, just like I know everything about our members.

Except for the shit Preston pulled. We were blindsided by the betrayal when Jake demanded our concierge and assistant, Luna, to book him a room. A man who wasn’t registered in our database.

“I do.” My low, intimidating voice has him cringing from me. “But he hasn’t told us about your little stunt. Didn’t warn us. I don’t trust him. Don’t trust anyone.”

“He had a busy week.” Preston, in a terribly unwise move, puts a dent in my plans to head home. “But ask him now and he’ll tell you.”

I’m looking forward to washing this filth off me. The new Albert Anastasia book I’ve had on my shelf for too long is far more interesting than this fucker over here.

Watching Carter when he enters our penthouse tonight will be even better. He said he’ll come back after his date, and fuck, I can’t wait to see him enter through the elevator doors.

His hair will be messy from having Amara’s fingers raking through it. His lips will glisten and his scent will be a mixture of him and her arousal.

I’ll be jealous as fuck. And equally aroused.

It’ll remind me of all the times I walked in on them banging on our counter. Spied on them in silence. Jerked off to Carter’s massive cock and how red Amara’s ass was from the spanking.

If people realize how sick I am… If *Carter* does, he’ll never forgive me. He’ll move out. He might be so repulsed that he’ll sell me his part of the business and disappear.

It’d make sense. I raised him. Called him *kid*. Drove him to school. Watched him grow up before my eyes.

I’d never even looked at him like that until three years ago, around the time he turned twenty-two. That wouldn’t matter.

He’ll think the worst of me.

Shut the fuck up.

Those memories don’t help. They remind me how fucked in the head I am. That only serves to eviscerate what little patience I have left.

“Don’t get me wrong.” I seethe. “We value Christopher as a member here. But now you’re both high up on our shit list.”

Preston sees the underlying threat for what it is. “Please, I don’t want to die.”

“I won’t kill you.” I straighten myself, wiping his blood on a cloth I have tucked in my pants pocket. “Not today.”

“Thank you, thank you.” He scrambles to get to his feet, stumbles like the pathetic fuck he is, then manages to stand up. “It won’t happen again.”

“No, it won’t.” I don’t shake his offered hand. Instead, I fix him with a deadly stare and point at the door that leads upstairs and to his freedom. “Your membership is revoked. You’ll do well to remember that next time anyone shows up here and says you sent him, you’re fucking dead, Preston.”

I’ll have one of our private eyes stalk him too, just in case.

“What, Mr. Murdock, I—”

“Get the fuck out of our hotel. Don’t ever return. You and Christopher can hold your meetings somewhere else.” I narrow my eyes. “Where they don’t value discretion.”

“But—” He has the nerve to contradict me a second time.

“No buts.” My voice is low, gruff, and ominous. Preston cowers at it. “Out. Of. Our. Hotel.”

I can tell he considers how clever it’ll be to try and negotiate again.

It’s moments like these that tell me I made the right decision by not sending Carter away to college. For all of Preston’s education, he has nothing on the experience and harsh life lessons Carter has learned by working alongside me.

“Don’t.” I cut my eyes to the torture devices we have out in the open. When I look back at Preston, the snot and blood stain his quivering chin. “Another second here and I won’t be as forgiving.”

With a hand plastered over his bleeding nose, Preston Richards drags himself out of Voltage for the last time.

Finally, I get to go home.

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CHAPTER FIVE

Killian

"This doesn't feel right." I hear Amara's voice from the foyer of our penthouse.

She shouldn't have been here. Carter shouldn't have either.

It's too early. I'm still in my suit. Still reek of blood.

Except there's no remnants of Preston on me. Nothing but lacerations and some swelling on my knuckles. Easily explained. I hit the punching bag at the gym without gloves.

I should tell them I'm here.

My voyeuristic side disagrees.

Carter and Amara can't see me yet, and I use it to my advantage. I cross the open space of the first floor from the living room to the kitchen to get myself another glass of whiskey. Listen in on them.

"I told you it's okay," Carter says in a gentle tone he saves for Amara and her alone. "Don't worry, pet."

She groans. They're not moving, and I continue to eavesdrop.

"We should've at least given him a heads-up, muffin."

Anyone else calling him that nickname would've turned me murderous. Me and Carter alike.

Murphy would attest to that.

"Hey, kid." He approached Carter one day. A redhead, asshole politician from DC that came to do his dirty business in our hotel.

A man who thought he could call Carter by anything other than his name.

Carter and I were on our way to our private elevators that'd lead us to the parking garage.

Needless to say, we came to a screeching halt.

By then, Carter was nineteen. He knew he had my approval to deal with people who didn't respect him however the fuck he wished.

"What did you call me, Murphy?" Carter stalked toward the man, towering over him.

Even from his profile, I could tell his smile was wide.

It wasn't an invitation. It was a threat Murphy had the brains to see.

He stammered, "I-I just meant, I mean, umm—"

"Yes?" I watched Carter flip open his pocket knife behind his back. "You meant?"

"Carter, please, I meant nothing by it." Sweat dripped into Murphy's green eyes. "It makes sense, doesn't it? I have known you since you were about this tall." The trembling Murphy gestured to his waist level.

Apparently, he wasn't as bright as I thought.

"This tall?" Carter shoved the blade of his knife to Murphy's waist.

Murphy screamed, grabbing his bleeding abdomen.

"Thought so." Carter bent to stare dead in the man's eyes. "Not a fucking kid. I'm one of the owners. You better keep that in mind."

I smile at the memory. Then curse under my breath, since I hate lying to myself.

Truth is, no one's been allowed to give Carter a nickname because until Amara came along, Carter had been mine.

For the first twenty-two years of his life, he was my stepson. Then, he'd been mine to fantasize about. His lips belonged around my cock. His body belonged in my bed. At least these are the thoughts I have on a daily basis.

No stepfather who raised a boy on his own should want to spoon him. Naked.

And yet I have. Still do. Which makes me a million times more possessive of him.

Now, though, I have to share him. She gets to call him whatever.

He's hers, despite how much I wish for a different ending.

That fucking does it.

This wallowing is beneath me.

"Give me a heads-up? And why is that?" I fill my tumbler a second time tonight and turn to watch them entering the kitchen.

He has his arms around Amara’s middle, pressing her back to his chest. They’re walking toward the kitchen island and stop when her stomach hits the granite counter. Then his arms bracket her against the counter.

“Hey, Killian, you’re up.” A slow smile spreads on Carter’s face.

Their presence turns this upscale penthouse into a home.

Their presence awakens things in me. The way Carter’s hovering over her. How her round, brown eyes seek my approval.

They look perfect for each other. A twenty-two and a twenty-five-year-old. Two young people who’ll never be interested in adding a man who’s almost forty-three to their duo. They shouldn’t.

“Killian?” Carter has his lips on Amara’s shoulder, eyeing me.

Both of them do. Standing there as if I hadn’t seen her naked and bent over this very island.

A second later, any and all thoughts of sex are wiped off my mind.

Because of Amara’s temple. Fuck, how could I have missed this?

The offensive lump is a bright shade of red. The frozen green peas pack in her hand drips on the floor, and she raises it hesitantly to her head.

Rage is the fuel that sets fire to my blood. Burning through my veins. Making me fucking lose it.

I slam the tumbler on the counter behind me and charge toward her.

Preston is a distant memory. My jealousy and sick desires are a thing of the past.

She’s hurt.

This wasn’t an accident. The bump is too big, too prominent to be caused by walking into a cupboard or some shit.

Someone touched her.

Not Carter, that’s for damn sure. The only women my stepson hurts are those who break Voltage’s rules. We don’t go easy on anyone.

That’s it. No one else.

Meaning someone hit Amara. That someone’s going to pay for this.

Her curious eyes widen in fear as I stalk toward her. Carter says nothing. The bond he and I have built over the years is thicker than blood. He gets what’s going through my head.

He knows better than to step between me and her. Between me and finding out what happened.

Even if my feelings aren’t reciprocated, I’ll murder someone for her.

“Amara,” I say, my voice hoarse, laced with rage.

Carter steps away from her.

I flick my gaze at him—a quick silent thank you.

Then I turn to her.

I tower over the young woman, casting a shadow over her small frame. She doesn't cower at the rage emanating from my every pore. Doesn't flinch or reek of fear like that loser, Preston. Jasmine and sex waft to my nose, and her wide eyes turn almost dreamy.

Nothing about me scares her. Though I should. Both Carter and I should instill the fear of God in her heart.

With one arm wrapped around her back and my free hand gripping her chin, I tilt her head up to me.

The ice pack drops to the floor, making a squelching sound.

Let it melt at my feet. See if I give a damn.

"Who did this to you?"

This is the first time I've been this close to her. The first I've felt her sweet breath fluttering on my lips.

I'm hard and vengeful. Fucking explosive.

When I look harder into her eyes, into her soul, I find arousal and determination there.

It's inappropriate. Wrong. Morally decadent.

Except I enjoy it.

Preston could learn a thing or two from her. In another lifetime. In this one, he's never going anywhere near her.

She's ours.

Carter's. She's Carter's.

Fuck.

Carter. My stepson, who I love. Who's watching our interaction. He doesn't interfere. Doesn't beat my ass for touching her the way I do.

He doesn't, but it doesn't mean it's okay. I have to restrain myself.

And I can't. I'm stalling, looking for other wounds. Looking at *her*. There's this heavy energy surrounding Amara. Dark and alluring. It's like I'm hypnotized.

Her eyelids flutter in slow motion and a blush creeps up her neck to her cheeks.

"Who?" I demand.

"Someone broke into my apartment," she finally says.

That explains it. She was attacked. She's confused. She's not aroused.

With this in mind, I step back, putting a lousy three-foot distance between us. My eyes don't leave her, though. I'm possessive now that I've had her in my arms. I look at her as if she belongs to me.

She doesn't.

That little fact should be an ice bucket to the flames inside me. Not that easy when I have the motherfucking bruise in my line of sight.

"Where's that *someone*?" I grip the kitchen island with one hand when all I want to do is sink my fingers into her hair.

Her gaze flickers from me to Carter at her side. Her sensuous lips curl into a mischievous smirk.

Dammit, it suits her. She's fucking adorable.

And crazy for smiling after someone broke into her apartment and hit her.

Perfectly, wonderfully crazy.

"Carter took care of him." There's no mistaking the pride in her voice. The puffing of her chest. Her admiration for my stepson. "Beat him up and sent him packing. I was knocked out the entire time. Although… I wish I hadn't been."

"No one's going to lay a hand on you again, Amara." I dip my chin, leveling her with a meaningful glare.

"No one," Carter adds.

My attention cuts to him. His gray eyes speak volumes in the deafening silence of the penthouse.

He approves of me treating her like she's ours.

They say more. They say he doesn't know why that guy was there.

As discreet as this couple is, our members aren't stupid. They were bound to catch Amara's heated gazes at the boy who owns her heart. Bound to see his teeth grind whenever anyone gets close to her.

His lips curve in a vicious smirk. His final silent message to me.

Carter didn't *send the burglar packing*. The insolent piece of shit who hurt Amara is undoubtedly on his last drive around the city. Inside the trunk of Shawn and Lance's car.

He hasn't shared any of it with her. I nod in understanding.

"You're doing the eye conversation trick." Amara's long, blond hair whips with her head as she twists it from Carter to me. "Again."

She's not mad as most people would. She doesn't feel left out. I swear she's amused.

Her quirked eyebrow says as much.

The twinkling of her eyes is a balm to my anger. Sucks out the fury I can barely contain.

My shoulders relax; the thin line my lips made smooths out. Carter's arm snakes around her, the corner of his lips hiking.

The little witch has this effect on us.

"Checking on Carter, that's all," I reassure her, placing a hand over his shoulder. "He said he's fine."

Instead of a friendly short slap, I let my palm linger. Carter's muscles strain beneath my palm and his head tilts in a challenge. We're no strangers to these heated face-offs.

We've been having them for months now.

The air crackles whenever I touch Carter. The heat cranks up in the penthouse when either of us walks shirtless around the house.

I've been convincing myself that I'm imagining things.

I probably am.

In the corner of my eye, I see Amara reaching her hand to Carter's waist. She coughs, pinching him.

"Oh, right." Carter pulls her tighter to his side. "Amara is moving in."

"Carter!" she shrieks.

"What, pet?" He twists to her, and my hand falls off his shoulder. He's not mine. "You asked me to tell him. So there I am. Telling him."

Her eyebrows knit, her lips pursed. Her cheeks are redder than the bump on her head.

"I asked you to *ask* him."

"There's no need—"

She ignores him, spinning to me, twirling a long blond lock of hair around her finger in a nervous gesture. "Mr. Murdock—"

"I think we're past formalities, don't you?" My hand twitches. I need to stroke her hair, to silence her worries. It stays firm by my side. "It's Killian."

"I—"

"She's not safe in her apartment," Carter interrupts, his voice stern. "She's moving in with us. For the foreseeable future."

"No, no." Amara waves her hands in the air. "I'm not."

My nostrils flare. She's not going to turn back and leave.

She's ours.

His.

“Killian, I…” she stutters. Just like she does when I stare her down over dinner.

I can’t be blamed if she chooses to prance in short, sheer, pink crop tops around the apartment. Around a man whose dark desires have been eating him alive.

“You’re staying.” The pads of my fingers trail along her cheek, and she leans slightly into me. “End of discussion.”

Carter watches this new interaction, still saying nothing. He’s not big on sharing. Maybe he’s okay with it because I’m—basically—his father. He assumes I’d never look at Amara as anything more than his girlfriend or touch her inappropriately.

And I won’t.

I’m touching her to comfort her. That. Is. That.

“However long it takes, Amara.” I move back, respectful of my stepson. “Our home is yours.”

“You sure?”

“Amara.” Carter kisses her forehead, avoiding the swollen bump. “He would never say it unless he meant it.”

“This was a bad idea, I’ll—”

“You’re not going anywhere. You’re staying right here, where Carter or I will always be able to look out for you, beautiful girl.” I spin around in the direction of the stairwell leading to my floor. “Good night.”

I have to get away. No more pheromones, testosterone, or sex for tonight. Or for the remainder of her stay here.

No more calling her beautiful girl, like I absolutely shouldn’t.

None of it.

None.

Of.

It.

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CHAPTER SIX

Amara

What just happened?

I'm on Carter's bed, what he deemed *our* bed, waiting for him to get out of the shower.

Wondering what the fuck.

Killian showed me kindness in the kitchen. Compassion. Warmth.

Sure, he wasn't lovey-dovey. Wasn't as tender and sweet as my Carter can be.

Believe it or not, my muffin—as possessive and unhinged as he is—has a soft side to him. He started calling me pet early on in our relationship. Laves kisses around my nipple ring after almost biting it off when we fuck. Tells me I'm his good little cum slut.

Seriously, half the time, the man is nothing short of adorable.

Killian, on the other hand, isn't. He's been generous. Has opened his home to me, had me over for dinner. Shared Carter's time with me without a word.

Sweet, though? Never.

Case in point, Carter's statement of *Killian is Killian*.

As I ponder this, my fingertips trail over the blue Egyptian cotton sheets. My eyes take in the new framed selfies of us he hung on the otherwise empty charcoal-gray walls.

I count one on each wall, three in total, not including the floor-to-ceiling windows. We're smiling, either under Brooklyn Bridge or under the covers and at my place.

This is the only place where he keeps photos of me. His and Killian's office are bare of anything personal. I visited there a couple of times to sign the contracts that binds Voltage to my flower shop for the next decade, and their desk—other than the laptop and work papers—was empty.

It makes sense. Carter insists on hiding our relationship when we bump into each other over there. Says he doesn't like gossip.

That's understandable. Carter cares about me. I *know* he does.

Killian, on the other hand, turns out to be a mystery. His possessive touch earlier threw me off.

Attraction is a physiological reaction. Angry glares make sense, since I'm in his space. Also, I can be silly. And loud.

Affectionate gaze, however? This isn't the Killian I've come to know.

Then again, maybe I had him all wrong.

Maybe the signs have been there and I've been too nervous around him to notice.

Oh, yes. Like on that Friday night three weeks ago.

Carter and I walked into the Murdock-Steele penthouse. We'd been back from one of our nights out under the Brooklyn Bridge. My guy had asked me to sleep over here instead of crashing at my apartment. Since I opened late on the weekend and it was easier for him to wake up early and go to work from there, I said yes.

Our tummies were blissfully padded with burritos. Carter didn't drink the mojito he got me. But I did. I annihilated the bitch.

I drunk-giggled about something he said. Carter, in turn, flashed me his deviant grin and promised to fuck the laugh out of me.

He dragged me lovingly toward his room, and I taunted him, "Choking me on your dick is more of a promise than a threat, you know."

"It's both, pet." He winked at me.

It'd been late at night. The only light permeated from the kitchen. I thought we were alone.

Wrong.

"Good evening."

My scream sounded inhuman even to my own ears. Killian scared the living shit out of me. My gaze snapped to the kitchen where his voice came from. To the man leaning his hip on the kitchen counter.

His white Henley stretched across his pecs, glowing under the soft overhead lights. His dark eyes were darker and more insidious than usual.

Killian's attention on us hit me hard in the chest.

There was something vibrant about it. Something sick. He was trying to crawl inside my head.

Carter let out a low laugh. Freaking laughed while my mortification rendered my mouth and pussy into a state of shock.

"Technically, Dad*,"—there were days he called him that, fueling the dirtiest fantasies in me—"it's good night. We're going to my room. Or would you prefer we continue this conversation here?"*

Dear Lord, I loved this man. But every now and then—only in Killian's presence—I wished he'd shut the hell up.

While Carter liked my silly side, Killian seemed to be apathetic to it.

Whenever the topic of sex came up in a conversation and slip-ups like this happened, Killian responded with…nothing. He'd direct his gaze at either Carter or me. A strange sentiment would bleed from him.

He'd have tingles snaking up my spine. My heart would slow to a stop.

Today was no exception.

I took the hint. Carter, less so.

"You don't mind it, do you?" Since Carter had me in his hold, he pulled me over to where Killian stood. "Us talking about getting my dick sucked?"

Jesus Christ, Carter, I'm the one who's drunk, not you*, I screamed inwardly.*

Killian replied in the form of another penetrating glare. His gaze cast between Carter and me, eventually landing on my man.

The kitchen felt as though it'd been doused in fuel and Carter struck the match to ignite it.

Surprisingly, though, I wasn't mortified anymore. My nipples puckered and my shocked vagina hummed to life. Wicked energy burst into the expansive space. Suffocating and delightful.

We were the only people in the world.

Burning. Choking on the fumes. Being incinerated to the ground.

I wanted so many things. Things no one else in the room wanted.

Like have them fuck me. Watch them fuck each other. Get mashed between both of them as they loved up on me and each other, and—

Those fantasies would be the end of me.

Carter glided forward, closer to Killian. Carrying me alongside him.

"Carter, let's go to bed." I tugged at his sleeve. As if that'd help. Moreover when my resolve was nonexistent. I didn't want to leave this room

at all. “Please, muffin.”

Carter, akin to his stepfather, leveled me with a glare that could burn down cities. Then proceeded to stride forward.

What was he doing?

More importantly, what would we be doing once we got to Killian?

Questions floundered in the thick haze of my lust. The possibilities were endless.

Killian hadn’t told us to back off. He continued to give us his thunderous silence and reproaching expression. That and nothing else.

He might’ve loved the idea. Might’ve hated it and wanted us to go away.

We didn’t. Carter only stopped when less than a foot separated us and the counter.

My breaths seared my lungs. My piercing teased the hardening nub of my nipple. We were doing this. We were actually doing—

No. No. No.

NO.

With one glance to the counter next to Killian, I saw it.

Georgia’s World of Flowers.

A part of me died. My soul crumpled in on itself.

My toughest competition in the Lower East Side. The one who had clients standing outside her shop day and night. Who was sunny and smiley in a non-creepy way. A stark contrast to me. Talking to flowers apparently freaked clients out. I refused to stop.

Which made Georgia a better face for a business, as my sister Melina texted me once. The bitch.

After a year of trying and failing to compete with her, I’d offered my services to big businesses. Hotels, for example. Their purchasing managers cared that I deliver beautiful flowers in a timely manner. I’d done that, leaving Georgia to do her thing with her walk-ins.

Apparently, she hadn’t done the same. Voltage was my thing. Fucking mine.

Who knew who else she approached? I’d have to call everyone tomorrow morning. Offer better prices. Ask them to sign contracts of exclusivity. I hoped it’d work.

I hoped Killian hadn’t dropped me already.

Without my clients, I’d run out of business. My landlords wouldn’t hesitate to evict me. They loathed me. They’d practically been waiting for

this moment to come.

Itching to hear that I failed.

Looking at her name on a business card hurt me more than a literal slap would. My possessiveness burned hard and painful in my chest.

Voltage was my client.

Despite being a pretty fucking upbeat person, losing my business and forfeiting my dreams had a devastating effect on me.

Panic clutched at my throat. My eyes couldn't seem to focus on anything.

Other than Georgia's fuchsia pink card and her pink catalog.

I watched it until Killian slid it away from my sight.

Too late.

I had no chance against her shop.

None.

Air. Air. I needed air.

I…

Sudden movements drew my attention. Anger and a sense of mission pummeled through the room.

Carter and Killian had another one of their silent conversations while I'd been suffocating here.

Now, they were putting their plan into action.

Killian tore the colorful catalog in half with his menacing hands. "It came in the mail," he hissed and tossed the shredded glossy papers into the in-cabinet trash.

Carter threw me over his shoulder. "I told you we'll never have another flower girl. Fucking never."

He spun on his heel, striding off to his bedroom across the other side of the open space.

As he stormed off with me on his shoulder, I saw Killian. His frown and lips pinched tight. The flex of his muscles beneath his Henley.

I couldn't help but wonder, did working with me piss him off? Or what?

I didn't have a chance to spend another second contemplating Killian. Carter slammed the door to his room behind us.

He took me in the ass hard, eviscerating every sad and self-deprecating thought that bothered me. Swore up and down that they adore my flowers.

That I'd never have to close my shop. Ever.

In retrospect, I'm able to look at the whole scenario in a brand-new light.

And I start understanding what happened this evening. Carter allowed Killian hold me. Killian stroked my face, called me beautiful girl.

Maybe Carter isn't the only obsessed man in this penthouse.

Maybe the two of them are. Over me.

Hopefully, over each other.

We could be together. Sure, the barely existent relationship with my parents would be ruined. The uptight fuckers don't approve of my shop. They stopped inviting me to family gatherings long ago because of my career choice.

The second they get wind of me dating two men, they'll disown me.

Destroy me.

They could.

They are, after all, the owners of the building I live in and where I run my shop.

They're my landlords.

Without the space for my flowers, it won't be long before I'm penniless. I don't have a college degree. No higher education. I could bartend, but I'll never earn enough to rent a new shop.

Carter will feel obligated to support me.

Fuck, no.

If I ask Carter and Killian for what I want, I could potentially ruin everything for everyone.

Killian was kind and sweet. A glimmer of my over-the-top muffin flashed in his eyes tonight. A glimmer. He'll never be interested in a relationship with us.

Best to leave things where they are.

Better yet, might as well get naked and wait for Carter.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

Carter

It’s the middle of the night.

My pet sleeps next to me in my king-size bed. I’m on my back, hugging her to my side. Her sweet cheek rests on my chest, her leg thrown over mine.

She’s naked. Knocked out and curled at my side. Has been like this for the past few hours.

Amara dozed off minutes after I got out of the shower. She was naked, waiting for me to fuck her. Then she fell asleep minutes after we started kissing.

Sweet little thing. Today’s been a lot for her.

Pride filled me at hearing her relate her part of the story on the way over here. The moments she’d been alone with Chuck before I got there. Because I was late.

Because of Preston.

I curse under my breath. If I find out Killian hadn’t made him bleed and walk out of our hotel fucking concussed, I’ll haunt Preston down to finish the job myself.

Problem is, it wasn’t Preston’s fault. Killian’s a big boy. He didn’t *need* me there.

I risked Amara’s life for a few more minutes with my stepdad, which is fucking sick.

But I lo—No. I care for them both. Am attracted to her and him.

My cold, emotionless heart thaws for Amara. I don't feel weak about it. I feel like a starved man who's been offered a bite of food. Any food.

Sure, my physical attraction to Killian has been living and kicking for years.

Watching him shirtless is my favorite part of our home. The muscles rippling across his chest. The light smattering of hair leading lower down the V-shaped muscle in his stomach.

The motherfucking bulge in his pants.

My thighs have clenched more times than I'd like to admit. It's sick, needing to have him plow into me. I beat off imagining I was sucking his cock.

I've stayed away, though. Thinking he didn't want to. Thinking Amara wouldn't be interested in having the three of us together.

But now, as the three of us have bonded the way we have, I want something more.

Beyond sex.

Beyond just Amara and me. Beyond just Killian and me.

We can't go there, though. Fucking life is challenging enough. Add Killian to the mix—another man who'll love her and who'll love me like *that*—and calamity would ensue.

I don't give a shit about fucking small-minded idiots. The world's opinions on my sexual preferences can go suck it. Because opinions are like assholes and all that.

Whatever.

I care that Amara and Killian live.

That is exactly why we can never be together.

"Carter," she hums.

I feel her warmth through my black T-shirt and sweatpants. My hand reaches up to stroke her silky blond locks. To carefully brush the bruise on her temple.

She doesn't say another word. Sound asleep.

So peaceful, my beautiful Amara. So different from her vivid, magnetizing personality.

Every part of her is a favorite of mine. I might even…love her?

I don't know how to say it. Hell, I've never said it to another person in my life. Not even Killian, and fuck knows I feel it.

Maybe one day I'll find it in me to tell her.

Her lips tug into a soft smile. I trace my fingers absentmindedly along her cheek, down her neck. Her purr reverberates in the quiet room.

As impossible as it is, my mind won't rest.

The three of us. The things we could do.

In bed. On the floor. Standing up.

Shit, my chest warms at the thought.

Goddamn emotions. It's fucking embarrassing.

"Carter, baby." Her eyes are closed when she speaks.

That's her *please, fuck me* voice. Throaty. Desperate. Needy. Her nipples pull tight against my T-shirt. Her breath quickens. Her hips rock in a lazy rhythm, grinding her sweet naked pussy on my sweats.

Horny little girl begs to be pounded. And I never say no to my pet.

It looks like it's going to be one of *those* nights.

Blood rushes to my cock. I'm harder than before. More on edge than I was a second ago. The need to claim her is palpable, and I don't ignore it.

I act on it.

Shifting us on the bed, I kneel beside Amara, hooking my fingers around the waistband of my sweats and black briefs and tugging them down.

"You like that, don't you, pet? You always come so hard." I stroke myself, getting off on how beautiful she looks in the silver moonlight. "So fucking hard when you wake up gagging on my cock."

Amara mumbles a bunch of incoherent words. My dick throbs in my fist. A drop of precum gleams on my Prince Albert.

My thumb presses her bottom lip down. The head of my cock is an inch away from her mouth. Ready to smear my semen on her plump lips.

"Baby," she murmurs, her hand slipping between her naked thighs. "Make me come. Both of you. Please. I'm so close."

Anger paralyzes me, hard and consuming.

She's cheating on me. In her dream.

Another man. Another motherfucking man.

I'm going to punish her pussy for its greedy owner. Going to sink my teeth into her until she screams.

"Yes, Carter, there, suck my tits, don't stop." Her groan tightens my balls, despite the flare of jealousy. "Now, Killian. Fill Carter's ass, please. You two together, I'll come so fucking hard."

Fuck. Yes.

That kind of dream I allow. That kind of dream I *encourage*.

This sweet kinky woman doesn’t just want any other man. She wants us. The both of us.

I have a second to decide on what to do next.

Other men in my situation would’ve addressed the situation in a calm environment. With her conscious. Dressed.

Amara didn’t choose another man.

She chose me. And I’m a violent sick fuck.

Her sick fuck.

I tuck myself back in, climbing out of bed. Silently, I pad to one of the drawers in my closet. Waiting inside is Killian’s black silk tie. He took it off this morning when I told him it looked worn out.

I lied.

Once he returned to the bathroom to style his hair, I slipped it into my pocket.

I like keeping mementos of him.

With Amara moaning like that, I’m itching to share it.

Share *him*.

The silk feels soft around my rough knuckles as I loop it around my hand. I raise it to my nose, and the delicate spicy scent infiltrates my senses. My cock jerks in my briefs.

“Oh, Jesus, yes.” Amara’s bottom lip drops, her fingers rubbing her clit in quick little circles. “Make them fit in my pussy. Make them fucking fit.”

My growl would’ve stirred her from her dream if she wasn’t this into it. Into the two of us stretching her cunt with our dicks. Killian would be on top, me at the bottom. I bet he’d love her nipple ring. My pierced cock.

As I rid myself of my briefs, I already know he’ll do more than approve. He’ll fucking come from how good our piercings will feel on his dick.

I flip Amara on her stomach, straddling her. Towering over her.

Amara’s moans and pleas grow louder.

I’m a fan of exhibitionism. Love it when the world sees or hears my partners claiming their pleasure. I get the sick satisfaction of displaying my dick pounding into any which hole.

I haven’t been that person with Amara, though. My cute, relatively innocent pet. The most we’ve done is fuck in the kitchen, and even then, it was one night I knew Killian would be out late.

A concern I’m done worrying over.

In fact, I fucking hope he walks in on this.

“Yes, yes. Right there, yes,” Amara moans, humping the bed.

“Such a good girl,” I whisper. “Calling my stepdad like the needy whore you are.”

Slowly and carefully, I lift Amara’s head so I can blindfold her with the tie. When she wakes up, she won’t see me.

Her nose will recognize *his* cologne. It’ll trick her into thinking Killian is the one fucking her mouth.

Amara continues to moan and rub herself when I flip her on her back, each of my knees brackets her face. She’s seconds from coming. All those little tells like her brow pinching together and the throaty sound of her moans.

My cock begs to drive into her mouth, but just because I’m unhinged doesn’t mean I have a death wish. The last thing I need is her teeth biting my dick off.

I reach back and pinch her pierced nipple. That does it, it always does.

She sucks in a deep breath, her back arching for a long second. Time freezes. And…there it is.

“That’s my baby.” I release her tit, leaning one hand on the wall behind the bed. “Coming like the good girl you are. Opening your mouth for me to fill you up with my cock.”

As soon as I say the words, I sense a shift in the room. In my periphery, I notice more light seeping in through a crack in the door. It’s nothing more than a thin, amber stripe, but my animal instincts catch Killian there.

Fucking called it.

Even the king of holding back can’t deny Amara. He’s been dying to watch us fuck. So what if he doesn’t know that she moans in her sleep?

“Ready to take my cock, pet?” I say for his benefit. And because I would’ve said anyway. My mouth is as dirty as my perverted brain.

Using my thumb, I grab the bottom set of her teeth, yanking them until she’s nice and open for me.

I lean in, spitting into her mouth, lubing the hole I’m about to abuse.

“Gonna suck every inch of me.” The crown of my cock leaks. I release her teeth to grip the base and spank her naughty lips with it. “Take everything I give you.”

Her heaved breaths and mine aren’t the only sounds echoing in my room. A low, rugged grunt.

Killian’s.

He’s here, fisting his cock. Jerking off to the sight of me and Amara. I twist us a little, offering the kinky fuck a better angle. Showing him how good it’d be for the three of us to be together.

After another groan, I almost tell him to come in. Suggest we wake Amara up, ask for her consent to add him in our bed.

Instead, I cling to my silence. He’s a grown-ass man. He wants to take a part of this? Then walk the fuck inside.

Otherwise, she and I are playing.

My pretty little doll. I’ll die if I don’t feel her tongue on me. Freaking detonate and disappear into thin air.

“Nice and wide, baby.” I pull on her bottom lip again.

This time, I don’t fuck around. I piston my hips forward, jamming my dick between her pillowy lips.

Her gagging noises make me harder, needier. Amara’s cough vibrates on my cock, and I get off on how my piercing hits the back of her throat. I see the drool dripping from the corners of her mouth, how her eyes squint in her sleep.

“Your mouth was meant to suck me.”

I listen hard, hearing a hand stroking flesh.

Amara’s teeth scrape the taut skin of my cock, and I roll my eyes at how good the light pain feels. My hand moves to her chin. My wet thumb caresses her while I drag my dick in and out of her mouth.

Even in her sleep, she starts moaning, gagging for me. Reacting to my dick stretching her lips and my hand choking her. She loves breath play, and I’ll always be here to give it to her.

“My beautiful little slut,” I croon. I’m seconds from spurting my hot cum into her mouth, so I slow my thrusts. “Tonight, though, you’ll be awake to take my cum.”

She drools, her eyes pinching. She’s still asleep.

That won’t do.

“Fuck, I can’t wait to see your reaction to this. Me in your mouth, Killian’s smell surrounding you.” I slide my hand higher, pinching her nose with my thumb and forefinger. Cutting off her air. “Not what you begged for, but I’d say it’s cutting it pretty fucking close, wouldn’t you?”

A hushed growl comes from the door. My cock jerks in Amara’s mouth the same moment she begins to struggle for air.

I ignore Killian, my focus resting entirely on Amara and how she fights to breathe.

Her mouth parts wider around my length. Her eyebrows fly up, high on her forehead, and over Killian’s tie. Then her nails dig into my thighs.

She’s ready. And so am I.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

Amara

I'm no stranger to waking up with Carter's cock in my mouth.

Smooth and hard against my tongue. It steals my breath from me.

I consented to him taking me in my sleep at the beginning of our relationship. Truth is, I consented to every kinky idea he offered.

However, when I consented, I agreed to have *Carter's* cock inside me. He said he'd never share me.

And that really is his dick I have in my mouth. I recognize the texture of the taut skin on his shaft. The corded vein my tongue knows so well. His Prince Albert grazing the back of my throat.

But I can't get over the smell.

Carter's cock smells like his soap and the delicious natural smell of his body.

The spicy cologne invading my senses doesn't belong to him. I smelled it before. On someone else.

No.

Impossible.

It can't be Killian.

It has to be Killian.

Oh, my God. I remember it now. My brave self in my dream begged for Carter and Killian. Asking them to do things I'd never do in real life.

I must've said them out loud.

I'm mortified.

I scratch Carter's thighs, needing to explain myself. As soon as my nails graze his skin, Carter releases his hold on my nose. He cups my cheek while he continues to choke me one thrust at a time.

I'm panicking. I need answers, and he doesn't give them to me. I don't mind his dick in me.

Don't mind the idea of him and Killian doing things to me, both of them. Even when I'm unconscious.

Fuck, I want them to.

I just wish it wasn't because I talked in my fucking sleep.

Killian's here. Has to be close. My eyes are blindfolded, so my best guess is he's at my feet. Or he could be lying next to me, watching his stepson violating my mouth while I take it like a good girl.

"Feel something different, pet?" Carter reads my mind. Another proof of the strength of our bond. "Smack my ass once for yes."

He doesn't give me another option. Doesn't say tap twice if you want me to stop.

I don't need him to.

His dominant voice gives me all the reassurance I need. That whatever I said in my sleep shouldn't humiliate me.

My open palm connects to the toned, flexed muscles of his butt.

Slap.

"Yeah, you do." His grip on my cheek tightens. "You smell him on you."

I smack his ass again.

Carter pulls out of me so fast that I cough.

"You're not wrong." He shifts on the bed, lowering down my body. "You do have his smell on you."

Carter's lips are on my jaw. The pierced head of his cock presses to my clit. He rocks his hips, his cock sliding easily on my wet pussy. My body jolts with every swipe of his Prince Albert to my sensitive bud.

"And you like it." Carter bites my earlobe.

I moan loudly as pleasure and pain blend inside me. That's the only sound my mouth makes. I don't know what to say, so I don't.

"Beautiful Amara. My dirty little whore." Carter's cock slides through my lips, pushing an inch of it inside me. "Want my stepdad and me together. To fuck you. To fuck each other. So fucking dirty."

"Carter." His name is a plea.

A plea for him to fill my pussy. To tell me where Killian is. To remove the blindfold so I can see his smoldering gray eyes and Killian's dark ones.

"I heard you in your sleep," he confirms my suspicions.

Mortification threatens to wipe out the heavy lust I have for Carter and—*fuck*—for his *stepdad*.

"Nothing to be embarrassed about." He reads my mind again.

Words continue to evade me. I bite the corner of my lip, my cheeks flaming.

"Admit it." Carter's hot breath fans along my neck, his hand rubs and his fingers flexing the underside of my breast. "Say you want him with us. Then I'll tell you if he's here."

He squeezes my breast, and I yelp, "Yes."

"Louder." His sinful hand skates higher, tugging on my nipple ring. "Say it fucking louder, pet."

Pain slices through me as he twists the piercing and tugs. A delicious one that has me moaning and squirming beneath Carter.

"Use your words." He sinks his cock deeper inside me, his teeth traveling along the sensitive nerve endings of my throat. "I need to hear them, Amara."

No one else has given me the heady feeling I get around Carter. But I'm not that heady that I can't read between the lines. He likes the idea of being fucked by Killian. Of Killian taking me.

Carter makes it sound dirty and wonderful. Uncomplicated. Like there's nothing wrong in finding love together. The three of us.

"Yes." The word tears itself out of my throat. "I dreamed about the two of you inside me, inside each other. I want it. I want it so fucking bad."

"The blindfold," Carter growls in response. "That's his tie you have covering your beautiful eyes. Killian isn't in our bedroom."

My cheeks heat, my neck burning. He's not here, and now Carter is aware of my highly inappropriate attraction. Of my filthy fantasies.

We haven't been quiet about it, either. Killian might still be up. He could overhear us. Could be disgusted by us. Or turned on.

"I wanted to mess with your head, pet." The rest of my thoughts die a quick death in my head when Carter manhandles me to my stomach. "Play a little game with your sweet, twisted mind."

"Ow!" I cry out when he pulls my hips high up.

“I got so turned on listening to you mumble. The things you said. My stepdad and I filling your holes?” In one forceful shove, Carter slams into my pussy from behind. “Or have him fuck my ass while I go down on you?”

His hand pushes me down between my shoulder blades as he slams into me ruthlessly. I want this pain. Need this pain. My fingers dig into the sheets. I cling to them while I take every harsh pounding of Carter’s massive cock. He ruts hard and fast into me, slapping my ass.

“You’re not mad?” I moan, though the word is muffled.

“Never.” The effort makes his voice hoarse. “You’re a deviant slut, wanting Killian’s cock to come between us. I don’t fucking hate it. At all.”

A groan that isn’t Carter’s echoes in the room. Louder than his grunts and the wet sounds of him pounding into my pussy. One that came from the direction of the door.

Killian. He may not be inside the room, but he’s here.

Lurking in the hall. Watching us. Stroking his cock, fucking his hand.

Carter has known all along.

Taboo tastes sweet on my tongue. Everything about this scene screams wrong. Following up on our darkest desires shouldn’t be happening.

The fragile dynamic we have would be no more.

We won’t last beyond tonight, that much I’m sure of. I have my reasons. I’m positive Carter and Killian have plenty of their own. Otherwise, they would’ve done something by now.

“It won’t happen.” Once again, Carter pulls violently out of me. “Don’t worry, though.” He bends to kiss and suck on one of my ass cheeks. “I’ll have you filled up. So filled up, you’ll scream.”

He gets up, and I hear him walking across the room.

Is he going to let Killian in?

The room’s quiet. I don’t hear them talking. I don’t hear anything but Carter’s feet and the sonorous beats of my heart.

Without Carter holding me up, I’m limbless on the bed, murmuring his name over and over. I’m high, too high on Killian’s cologne and Carter’s *everything*.

“You called, pet?”

The harsh spank jerks my attention back to Carter. “Always,” I whisper.

“Kinky little girl.” Carter slides his arm between me and the mattress and jerks me up to my hands and knees. His teeth tug on my earlobe, and he

says, “My precious slut. I’ll always do everything to bring each and every one of your fantasies to life.”

Another low, barely audible growl. Again, not Carter’s.

While Carter’s busy squirting lube on my asshole, I decide to rebel. I have to know. Have to see Killian for myself.

Like a snake in the grass, I slide my hand up. Carter’s attention remains on my ass, lubing it, pushing his thumb in. He hasn’t caught me.

I have to see.

Inch by inch, I push Killian’s tie up my forehead.

A stripe of light filters through the crack in the door. A thin sliver that starts just over six foot three if I had to guess. Killian’s height.

My eyes adjust to the dim light in the room. I can make half of Killian’s face, while Carter adds a second finger to my ass.

I see Killian pushing the door a tiny bit wider. And the cock he’s stroking. Jesus, he’s huge. As in Carter huge.

Carter is *big*.

“I’m obsessed with your asshole.” The broad tip of the vibrator and Carter’s growl demand my attention. I adjust the tie on my head, leaving an inch to have a view of Killian. “I fucked it with my cock and our vibrators, put butt plugs in it, and look at you. Still tight and fucking perfect.”

Carter offers pain. Sweet pain. Pain that has me crying and screaming his name. So loud that normally he gags me to keep my neighbors or Killian from thinking he’s murdering me.

Tonight, Carter doesn’t want me quiet.

Tonight, he’ll fuck me to oblivion for my own pleasure *and* for my screams to seduce Killian.

He thinks of everything, my Carter.

“You’re going to take it.”

I’m aroused. My pucker is lubed. Stretched. The head of the vibrator slips inside me without a struggle.

“You’re going to pretend it’s Killian’s.” Carter stills, pinching my ass to coax another scream out of me.

“Carter,” I shout when the rest of the dildo is being shoved inside my tight hole.

While Killian watches.

“No, Killian. Since he gets to have your ass.” Carter rises, pulling me up with one arm around my stomach. “I get to fuck your dripping pussy.”

The bed is warm. The smell of sex and decadence lingers in the air. The sting in my ass evolves into a mind-numbing pleasure.

“Hold still, A.” Carter lets go of me, and I do as he says.

Because he’s not asking. He’s not fucking requesting.

He orders me.

Despite the pressure on my ass and the overwhelming desires swirling inside me, I stay upright.

Carter’s “Good little pet” is followed by Killian’s short nod.

My heart squeezes in my chest. None of the men has acknowledged the other’s presence. None of them stepped forward to turn this fantasy into something real.

Meaning a fantasy is all we’ll ever be.

Carter slips his finger along the inside of my thigh, then removes it. The sound of him sucking on his finger and the pop at the end mends my broken heart. Reminds me that I have *him*. That what we have is freaking epic.

“You’re delicious.” He smacks my ass again, a period to end his sentence. “I’ll never stop eating you out. Ever.”

“Thank you.” I sigh. I’m overwhelmed, turned on, and am so fucking grateful for him.

“Thank me when my cock is buried deep inside you.”

Carter moves the vibrator in and out of my ass. When my body shakes and I’m seconds from collapsing, he leaves it there, grabs my hips, and shows me no mercy as he pushes himself all the way in.

He’s fully seated inside. Both his girth and the vibrator’s stretch me, fill me. The air pushes out of my lungs.

“Thank you, Carter.”

“That’s it.” Another smack. And another one. “Taking two cocks so well.”

His fingers dig into the flesh of my ass. Tomorrow, I’ll have blue and purple marks. Sitting on it will hurt. Which is why I’ll wear tight jeans. To feel him with me *always*.

Carter ruts into me, his hand pressing on the vibrator to keep it in place. He’s relentless. Hits me hard each and every time until the blindfold drops back in place.

My eyes see nothing.

My ears work just fine. After long minutes of me being ravaged by Carter, Killian lets out a grunt. Or a laden breath.

Lust explodes behind my eyes. A moan escapes my lips and my pussy clenches around Carter. I melt at the sound Killian made, combined with Carter's dirty, all-consuming love.

Then I come. The force of my orgasm pummels through me. My body quivers. My elbows tremble. Carter groans at how I clench around him, squeezing, sucking him into me.

"Is this what you dreamed of? Being our sweet, used hole?" Carter holds me with one hand, shoves the vibrator deep. "Being owned by two cocks?"

More. I want more than that. I want them together.

I can't talk. I can hardly breathe. I ride the sensations as they burn through my stomach. On my fingertips.

This isn't just about me, though. It's about Carter's body touching me. About his stepdad watching us.

In the darkness behind Killian's silk tie, I imagine him touching both Carter and me. That Carter loves it like I do.

Carter bends forward, winding his fist in my hair, and yanks me up. As much as the vibrator in my ass allows, anyway.

"Answer me," he grunts, tugging on my roots for emphasis. "You get off on that? That's why you came like a good little whore on my dick?"

Though the vibrator isn't actually Killian's dick, I play along. It's freaking hot.

"Yes." My stomach winds as a second orgasm builds. I push back against Carter, needing more, desperate for him to give me more to jump over that edge. "I want to come with both of you inside me."

"You will," he whispers, and I know it's for my ears only. I'm not sure why.

Honestly, in this blissful moment, I don't find it in me to care.

There's a reason they invented the word *later*.

Carter's hand slithers from my hair to my neck. He chokes me, angling my head up.

"Come with me."

I wait until his cock swells in my pussy. Until he stretches me seconds before his orgasm shoots inside me. Until his groans are unrestrained and his fingers pinch my clit mercilessly.

Then, and only then, do I allow myself to let go. With him.

And *him*. Killian's attempt to quiet his grunt of pleasure fails. The feral sound gives him away.

He came with us.

In the darkness I'm in, I let myself ride the waves of my orgasm while these two men come off theirs.

I'm in heaven.

I'm in love. I'm going to die, I'm so happy.

"I adore you, pet." Carter tilts my head, slanting his lips against mine. Claiming me with a passionate kiss. Biting me. Plunging his tongue behind my lips.

He makes love to my lips for minutes that feel like hours. I cry out when he stops, then smile at how gentle he's being.

Carter caresses my stomach, my breasts. He pulls out of me ever so slowly, removing the vibrator tenderly. Making sure his touch comforts and doesn't hurt. Spoiling me.

He's the master of aftercare. He can be the most violent man while his dick is hard, but once we're done, he's back to being a big softy.

My unhinged, cutie pie, muffin.

It makes me wonder what Killian is like. Would he have threaded his fingers through Carter's hair, kissed his forehead, ran him a bath like Carter does for me? Would he have spooned the two of us in bed, whispering sweet nothings to help us come down from the high?

I don't know. I probably never will.

"Let's get you out of that, A." His hands are on me to help me to my back. Kisses my pussy. Removes Killian's tie.

There he is, my handsome guy. His muscles pulsing, his dick still hard. The room is darker, though. When I sneak a glance to the side, I find the door to Carter's bedroom has been closed.

"Such a good girl." Carter's mouth tastes like me. And I smile. "I'll take care of you, Amara. From now until the day I die. I'll take care of you."

I believe him.

"You deserve a bath." Carter's feet hit the rug by his bed first, his arms scoop me up second. The moonlight illuminates him enough so his gray orbs sparkle.

My body shivers at the forehead kiss he gives me. I fight to keep my eyes open. To look at my handsome, perfect man.

"I'll find a way," he says, his words cryptic, and he doesn't elaborate.

I don't ask him to, either.

I let him carry me to his bathroom and give me the warmest bath. That’s more than enough.

That’s everything I need.

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CHAPTER NINE

Killian

Runner's high.

Yeah, right.

It's a beautiful morning. I've just finished a ten-mile run on the treadmill.

My sneakers pounded loudly with how fast I went. My fingers tapped the display over and over as I upped the speed and incline every five minutes. Drops of sweat cascaded down my neck and back with the effort.

I'm supposed to be euphoric. Coasting high on endorphins.

Yeah, right.

Last night's memories should be wiped out from my mind.

Yeah. Right.

The memories didn't go away. They're here. In my bathroom. Stronger than ever.

I'm so hard, it's a fucking agony.

The things Carter and Amara did don't go away. Won't go away.

I've never seen Carter take Amara like that. Using both her holes. Blindfolding her with *my* tie when he fucked her.

Saying my name.

I fucking heard that. Every last word.

My eyes slam shut, and I shake my head. My sweat-soaked hair clings to my forehead and I push it up my head.

Playing the way they fucked—the things they said—in my head, is wrong. On so many levels.

Carter was Joelle's newborn when I took them in.

I was the one who showed Carter how to shave. Taught him how to drive. Explained to him it's okay to beat the shit out of bullies.

Threatened his teachers that if they gave him a detention one more time, I'd give them one of my own. In a classroom six feet under.

For fuck's sake, I was the one who grabbed his wrist when he'd stab at the rug beneath his bed. While most kids were afraid of the monsters under their beds, Carter 'slayed' them so he could hang their insides on his walls.

He'd been a twisted little kid. I'd been that kid's father figure.

He's not a kid anymore.

I have to keep reminding myself of that fact. It isn't sick to want to be with an adult. It just isn't. Neither is Amara. She looked my way, while he fucked her. Whether she saw me or not, I can't tell. In any case, she wasn't disgusted by Carter's words. Didn't tell him to shut up.

My clothes are dropped into the leather hamper next to my vanity. Housekeeping will be here tomorrow to wash them. Carter's and Amara's as well.

Fuck, their names alone have my cock thickening.

I return to the one thought that never fails to sober me. The thought that's kept me from coming onto Carter sooner. When I started have different feelings for him.

They'll say I've been grooming him. I haven't. Fucking ever. No one will be able to prove that lie.

But it won't stop our members and enemies from whispering. Making up false rumors about shit I didn't do to Carter when he was underage. They'll turn everyone against us.

Our power would mean nothing once these floodgates open. Carter's future will be tainted. Ruined. Our lives would be on the line.

Those sobering thoughts aren't helping. They fuck with my head worse.

Moreover since my cock doesn't give a damn about grooming or the future. I still hear Carter grunting my name. Still see Amara coming with both her holes filled.

I'll have to rub this one out.

I step into my large shower, sliding the glass doors closed behind me. My dick throbs, begging for relief. I turn the knob on the hot water and stand beneath the ceiling-mounted showerhead.

The spray washes over my head, my shoulders, my aching thighs. Steam billows all around me, obstructing my view of the veiny black and white

marble walls.

The hot water spray scalds my skin. My fist closes on my aching cock.

“Fuck,” I hiss. I forgot to lock the door to my bedroom. I’m not alone here.

Amara’s waiting in Carter’s bedroom, their bedroom, for me to drop her off at work since he’s gone. He had to mediate between a drug dealer and his failed cleaner. It’s a meeting I scheduled for him to lead by himself to show he doesn’t need to hold my hand, something I do every once in a while.

He texted me two hours ago when he left, asking me to help out. Said he doesn’t want anyone seeing Amara leaving our apartment and that if she asks, tell her we don’t want her leaving the shop after dark by herself. That will be our excuse.

I agreed. Of course, I fucking agreed.

Last night wasn’t mentioned by either of us.

Last night meant nothing.

My angry erection stares back at me, insisting it wasn’t, in fact, nothing.

Carter’s room is on the first floor. One below me. Amara has no reason to come in here, nor will she hear me behind the door and the shower spray.

Besides, it’s not like I have a choice. The alternative is spending a car ride looking like this.

I’ll just have to be quick.

My eyes pinch shut, my hand slams into the wall.

Behind my closed lids, I see them. Amara and Carter.

In my fantasy, Amara lies on her back. Her head hangs on the edge of the bed facing the door. Carter’s on top of her, fucking her on her back.

I’m standing, hovering over her. Naked. Jerking off to them, getting off to the sounds of their moans and groans. To the slippery sounds of his cock filling Amara over and over and over.

His piercing glints every time he pulls out, only to slam back harder into her. I run my tongue over my bottom lip, wondering how it’d feel in my mouth.

Looking between Amara’s brown eyes to Carter’s gray ones, I beat off to a slow, measured rhythm. Taking them in. Carter’s ripped chest, the hint of a smirk on his lips. Amara’s breasts, her nipple ring, the way her pussy sucks Carter in.

Jealousy doesn’t belong in this fantasy. Here, we’re together. We belong.

“You want to fuck her?” Carter drives harder into Amara, his abs flexing with the effort. “Want to feel how tight her pussy is?”

“Please.” Amara reaches her hand up for my cock.

I slap it away.

“Beautiful girl.” A smirk tugs at my lips, stretching wider, as I watch the blush creeping up her neck. I grab a fistful of one of her tits, the pierced one, and twist. “Beautiful and fucking greedy.”

My gaze moves from her face, down her belly to her thighs. Carter’s on his knees and has both his hands on them, gripping them tight. His dick is slick, Amara’s arousal dripping all over it.

Fuck.

“You have a gorgeous fucking cock, Killian,” Carter groans, picking up the pace. “Right, pet?”

“So gorgeous.” She tilts her head up, her hooded eyes fixated on me fucking my fist. “I wish he’d put it in me. Deep. Make it hurt. Make me cry.”

“You see?” he says behind clenched teeth. “She wants it. I *want you to put it in her.”*

The words hit Amara harder than Carter’s cock. She clenches around him, screaming and moaning as her body shudders with her climax.

My stepson’s jaw tics, the veins in his biceps pumping.

“Please,” she begs again.

“Do it,” Carter says, eliminating the last of my doubts.

“Tongue out, Amara.” I pin my thighs to the bed, aiming my cock to her lips. “This dirty mouth is going to get fucked for all the filthy words coming out of it.”

“Yes,” is her last word before she obeys my order.

Watching her part her lips for me turns the itch inside into a wildfire.

I’m not gentle as I grab a fistful of her hair. Not concerned about her gagging when I shove myself inside her. I take her. Fucking own her while Carter beats her pussy with his cock.

“Fuck,” I groan once I’ve deepthroated her.

In my shower—in the real world—I jerk off harder. Faster. Needing her mouth and knowing my hand will never be enough.

“Such a good little whore you are.” Carter’s mix of degradation and praise has her moaning on my cock. “Getting railed like this. So fucking pretty.” He looks up, his gray eyes sparkling. “Both of you.”

“Shut up and fuck her.”

As if we’ve been practicing it forever, we move in perfect unison. There’s no awkwardness as our bodies and Amara’s fall into a steady, harsh rhythm.

I twist and pull on her pierced nipple. He spits on her clit and calls her our good little slut.

The beautiful thing she is, she takes it. Her throat makes the most delicious sounds, tears run down her cheeks, saliva on her cheeks.

But it’s not enough.

Carter is too goddamn far from me.

Halting my thrusts, I order him, “Come here.”

My command reverberates on the walls of his bedroom. There’s no mistaking the unhinged edge of his smirk.

“Come here?” He pulls out of Amara’s pussy, his glistening cock bobbing between his thighs.

I pull out too, giving Amara some air. She hums when I stroke her cheek. Rub her swollen lips. Look deep into her hooded eyes.

“You really are a beautiful girl.” I yank on her hair, despite the gentle praise. “Needy and desperate. Good thing you have us.”

“More,” she moans, her voice hoarse from the deep throat fucking.

“Soon, greedy girl.” Only once I see she’s okay do I return to Carter. “And you. Turn around on all fours, and come on top of her. Lick her pussy. Make her come again.”

My cock thickens. Throbs in my hand. I groan in the shower, unable to hold it in anymore.

He does as I say, bringing his perfect, toned ass to my face.

Amara sighs, gazing at me with dreamy eyes and a soft smile.

I glare down at her. “Do I look finished?”

Silence.

Carter stops licking her pussy to spank it. “Answer him.”

“No,” she whispers.

“That’s right. I’m not done.” Letting go of her hair, I hold onto the base of my cock. I’m soaked in her saliva, smearing it on her lips, nose, in the space between her eyes.

Her pleasure sounds reach all the way to my balls.

I push my cock against her lips and she wraps her lips around me, letting me inside her.

“Now, suck me.”

I thrust deeper when she starts, then lean forward and slip my hand around Carter's cock. He's wet with her arousal, and my hand slides on his thick, veiny dick as I jack him off. As I flick my thumb on his piercing.

Being with them is every bit as perfect as I imagined. I have both of them. Kinky and wrong and absolutely right in my hand.

"Oh, fuck yes," he curses.

"I said eat her out, Carter." I squeeze his throbbing head, pinching the piercing. "Don't stop."

His pained growl and her willing mouth nearly push me over the edge. I'm close to blowing my load down Amara's throat.

"Yes." Carter does as I say, his black hair falling and hiding the top of his eyes. He moans into her pussy. She moans around me.

"Come." My last restraint is about to snap. "Both of you, come."

My command has the three of us making it to the finish line together. I feel his cum shoot out on my hand. She moans and screams as she gags on my cock, swallowing every fucking drop.

Back in my shower, I can't stay quiet. I'm loud when white, sticky spurts of my cum shoot on my stomach, then wash down the drain with the water.

Slowly, I regain my sanity.

Slowly, the self-loathing returns.

How deeply, thoroughly, fucked do I have to be to have all these sick scenarios in my head?

I grab the shampoo, lathering it into my hair harder than necessary.

I've been repressing my desires for them, acting like a grumpy asshole around her and stricter around him. For good reason. These fantasies are wrong.

It's an abomination, the things I want to do to them. The people I want to have.

I'm not going anywhere near their room ever again. If Amara's screams will actually be those of pain next time, Carter is more than capable of looking after her. Protecting her.

Saving her like I wish I could.

I'm not a part of this. Never have, never will be.

Knock, knock, knock. I hear from the door to my bedroom.

"Killian? Are we leaving soon?"

Amara.

I sigh in relief.

Talk about perfect timing.

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CHAPTER TEN

Amara

"You can drop me off around the corner," I tell Killian. "I'll walk the rest of the way. It's only three blocks to my shop."

"No."

My lips twitch, unease twisting my insides. It has nothing to do with passing by Georgia's pink, immaculate shop, and everything to do with sitting in a car with Killian.

It's why I'm fidgeting in my seat. Why one of my hands tugs at the soft material of my pink skull dress, the other patting one of my two space buns nervously.

Not for dragging him through Manhattan's unforgiving morning traffic.

I'm in a confined space next to a man whose dick I sorta saw last night. My boyfriend's stepfather.

It's beyond messed up and heinously wrong.

Even if Carter was more than okay with it.

If I had any doubts, they evaporated when I woke up to his note saying, *You're the kinky light of my life*, scribbled in his elegant handwriting.

My baby. Both my holes are sore from how he fucked me last night.

From what we did.

While we talked about Killian. While he watched.

I'm not ashamed of it. I *wanted* it.

After years of being belittled by my parents, I'm done being ashamed of who I am. I know that. Carter knows that. That's why he keeps reassuring me we're keeping our relationship a secret because of work. That we have

to lay low when we're in the hotel so no one gets the wrong idea and thinks he's nice.

Brain, stop bouncing around. We're in the middle of a conversation here.

"I feel guilty that Carter made you take me in this traffic." My fingers now turn to assault the strap of my yellow floral handbag. My cheeks burn hot. "Please, just drop me off. Even here. It's fine."

"It's not fine. You were assaulted last night. They didn't catch the guy." Killian's deep voice and concern soothe my worried heart by some. "I care about keeping you safe. Carter was right to ask me to drop you off and I'm happy to do that. Once you're there, Opal will be with you, right?"

My employee. The one I could afford, thanks to the large orders that Voltage makes.

"Yes, she's coming in today."

"Good," he ends the discussion.

He might be done. Me… A little less so.

"It makes no sense." I let go of my poor space bun, flexing my fingers in my lap. "It's just a few blocks away. There's no use for you to be stuck…" I wave my hands to the creeping traffic. "Here."

"I'm not stuck. I don't give a damn about traffic when you might be watched by someone." His sharp jaw and intense eyes don't steer from the road. "It's a good time as any to tell you we're taking precautions. I texted my guy to take down your camera in the shop and install new ones. They'll be connected to an app on our phones. You'll be safe."

A screaming taxi driver flips his middle finger at someone. He captures my attention for a brief moment. Only a brief one.

"I'm grateful." I seethe, choosing my words carefully. I like talking to Killian. What I don't like is when they do stuff behind my back. Take control of my life. "But call them off."

"I won't." He stares straight ahead, his lips twitching. "That's final."

Here, in the passenger seat of Killian's car, I have front-row seats to the eyes that haunt me in my dreams. The eyes that bore holes in Carter and me yesterday. They're deep and commanding, and I'm an inch from losing my resolve.

"My parents were controlling assholes." My words are half plea, half demand. "Carter is a controlling sweetheart. I like that. Don't make me regret liking him."

Don’t make me regret moving in. I really fucking like living with the two of you.

“Not calling the guy off. This man was the last one who will ever lay a finger on you. Next time, we’ll have the police there in a matter of minutes.” Killian flexes his long fingers on the wheel. “We’re the only ones who’ll have access to the camera app. It’s for your own safety.”

He glances at me, quirking an eyebrow. Challenging me to refuse again. The small movement has my mind wandering. I’m hot all over.

When he switches his attention to the road, I keep staring at Killian. At the man who was a part of Carter’s and my night.

Both of them work out. Their bodies are those of two sculpted gods, except Killian packs a little more muscle than his stepson does. His large frame fills the black leather seat. If I hadn’t known better—and maybe I don’t—I’d believe the manufacturer molded the seat to Killian’s measurements.

The black tailor-made suit sits on him like a second skin, although the clothes aren’t what’s grabbing my attention.

Hello, new ink.

I haven’t spent time alone with Killian, let alone had the chance to ogle him this freely. Maybe this isn’t new. Maybe I haven’t had the chance to look long enough to see the hints of his tattoo climbing from beneath his collar.

My curiosity rises and envelops me. I sink my fingernails into my palm. A meek attempt to force down the fucked-up urge to slip my fingers between his skin and his suit and take a peek.

I mean, he did have a view of every part of me last night. It’s only fair that I get to check out what ink the mysterious Killian Murdock tattooed to his skin.

I wish I’d find Carter’s name there.

That’d be so. Hot.

In the corner of my eye, I see a red car squeezing past us and almost causing an accident.

Killian hits the brakes and mashes his finger to the wheel, and the horn blares.

“What the fuck?” I yelp. Then add, “Asshole!”

“Motherfucker,” Killian hisses behind clenched teeth, cutting his eyes to mine. “Are you okay?”

My focus should be on his face. Instead, I'm drawn to his hands on the wheel. I notice the broken skin on his knuckles. Last night's events must be the reason I've missed the scraped skin.

Today, I notice. My God, I love the rugged look. Carter gets those lacerations when he boxes without gloves at their building's gym. Did he convince Killian to give it a try?

These men are too hot to be real. When the three of us would be together, I—

"Hey, beautiful girl." Killian's eyes search mine while he ignores the other drivers honking at us. "Are you hurt?"

Right. Where was I?

"I'm fine. About the cameras, Killian, don't do it. Last night, the man who attacked me waited for me to be home. No one would attack me at my shop." The more I talk, the more worked up I get. He can't decide to switch from growling at me to controlling my life. He can't. "Thanks, but no thanks."

His dark brown brows pinch in concentration. Lost between navigating through traffic and the conversation he's having in his own head.

The lengthy silence ensues. We're almost at my shop. Almost out of this awkward morning-after-yet-not-morning-after talk. The first real one I had with Killian.

I want out. I want to stay here forever.

The polar needs mix and mingle inside my heart, bombarding my senses.

Needing to find an outlet for my hyper-awareness of everything Killian, I squirm in my seat.

Carter would've handled this situation far better than I do.

"This isn't open for discussion," Killian deadpans. "I—We need you safe. You're family. We take care of our own."

The way he talks to me like I belong. To Carter *and* him. I'm sure he means it like family, but holy hell. He exerts strength control and comfort. Much like Carter, and yet so different.

I bet they'd look beautiful together. Two sides of the same coin. Stroking. Exploring each other's bodies. Fucking raw and ordering me to join them.

Heat pools between my thighs. I'm breathing hard. The radio is off and Killian must hear every labored inhale. Every shuddered exhale.

I bite the inside of my cheek to silence myself.

My nipples aren't as easy to control, so I cross my arms over my chest.

The sudden movement causes Killian to whip his head to me.

Wrinkles form on his forehead. A frown curves his lips downward. His hand twitches on the steering wheel.

Finally, he breaks the silence. “Are you cold?”

“I, uh…” My inability to lie to Carter and evidently to Killian as well turns out to be a real fucking inconvenience. So I change the subject. “I’m not cold. And you owe me an answer, Killian.” Emboldened by my own damn self, I charge forward. “An answer I’ll like.”

He barks a short laugh at the same time a guy runs across the road. Some people here have a serious death wish.

Killian hits the brakes again. Thankfully, we’ve been lugging forward at a snail’s pace, so no one got hurt. I didn’t even feel the seat belt.

“You okay?” he asks.

“Yeah.” My answer comes with a scowl.

“Hmm,” he muses. “So, an answer you’ll like.”

He doesn’t rush to lift his foot off the brakes. Especially since we have a red light waiting for us three feet ahead.

It doesn’t matter to the man behind us. He doesn’t stop honking.

“Excuse me.” Killian turns to look over to the side where the honking man pulls up to.

By the time he stops next to us, Killian has his tinted window lowered and his attention zooming on the other man.

I only see the back of Killian’s head, but I’d say the other dude received one serious death glare.

You’re fucked, fucker.

As he should, the Escalade dude whips his gaze in the other direction. So scared he doesn’t even apologize.

The fear Killian instilled in him reminds me of what Carter did to poor Bradley. I didn’t like that he scared the poor clerk. I couldn’t deny how hot it was, either.

Now, I’m tempted to join the fun. Stick my tongue out at the man who can’t see me anymore.

“Stop being an embarrassment, Amara,” I hear Dad in my head. *“We can’t take you anywhere. We don’t give someone the finger when you’re the problem. Stop cutting your steak with the wrong goddamn knife. Maybe then no one would want to throw up when they look at you.”*

I’m not ashamed of who I am, that belief still stands. But, yeah, Killian isn’t Carter. He wouldn’t think I’m the cutest thing ever. He’d think I’m immature. That I’m not ready for…

For what?

“Okay. I won’t have cameras installed in your shop.” Killian surprises the heck out of me when he says that.

My eyebrows shoot up. “Really?”

This feels strangely easy. Too easy. A minute ago, he was being a control freak. He’s never struck me to be the one to bend to anyone’s will. Much less mine.

“Yes, really.” One nod. Firm and decisive.

The light turns green. Killian doesn’t move. No one else does, anyway, with the traffic and all.

Then his eyes land on my wounded temple like they had last night.

Killian’s brow creases, his dark gaze softening. There’s sadness and possessiveness in his dark features. A moment later, his teeth grind, and a vein bulges in his neck.

My limbs weaken, and my heart stops as his hand rises in slow motion.

Same as yesterday.

Only difference is, I’m not confused by adrenaline and exhaustion.

I’m present. Every part of me is.

“That son of a bitch.” Killian cups my cheek, smoothing his thumb over my bump. It’s as if he’s being reminded of his anger all over again. “Does that still hurt?”

My skin prickles beneath his touch. My eyelashes flutter.

Is this what you dreamed of? Being our sweet, used hole? Carter’s words from last night slash through the cloud of lust I’m under.

My dream of the two of them was enough of a betrayal. Carter told me he loved it. His dirty talk and our dirtier sex proved as much.

But he’s not here. And that’s not okay.

I’ll drive an icepick through my eye and into my brain before I ever betray Carter. I won’t cheat on him. Won’t do anything remotely *close* to cheating on him. Even in my head.

“I’m good. It doesn’t hurt.” I rear back, putting some much needed distance between me and Killian. My hand flies up to where his has been on an impulse, and I angrily return it to my lap. “I’m good. The frozen peas helped.”

“Okay.” He nods once, leaning back into his seat. “I’m sorry I couldn’t have been there to help Carter…fuck that guy up.”

The intersection opens up, and we trudge forward. There she is. My shop to our right.

I’m itching to get back to my normal life. Open the glass doors, waltz inside my shop. Smell the flowers, greet each and every one of my plants. Same as I’ve done for the past four years.

I’m not scared someone might hurt me there. It’s *my* shop. It doesn’t belong to the asshole who attacked me. I won’t give him the power over me. Fuck that.

“Killian,” I say as I look at the yellow taxis, limos, old cars, and SUVs ahead of us.

“Yes, Amara?”

Not beautiful girl. Not a huff of angry air. Not a grunt.

My name. *Amara*.

The shivers it sends up my spine make me shudder. I pinch my eyes shut, scolding myself while building a wall around me. There’ll never be the three of us. Never.

There’ll always be a Carter and me.

“You’re sure it’s okay for me to move in?” I scrunch my nose, fretting over what his answer might be, but needing it anyway. “I’ll never tell Carter if the answer is no. My apartment is safe. Most days. I’ll install better locks on my door, it should—”

“Amara.” There goes my name again. I close my eyes to protect myself from the impact of his gaze that I sense on my skin. “Look at me.”

I stifle a groan and peek at him.

At the fierce energy both he and Carter radiate. While Carter has his sexy maniac glint, Killian’s power is a dark, heavy one.

That does it. I’m telling Carter I’m allergic to the Bentley’s leather later today. Anything to avoid *this* from repeating itself.

“I didn’t fucking *order* you to move in to please Carter. I meant it.”

Holy.

My stupid mouth has the words *Okay, Daddy* about to leave it. They literally sit on the tip of my tongue as I stare into his fiery glare.

Uh, yeah. No way am I saying *that*.

I sigh instead.

“You’re not a burden, never have been. It’s safe with us. I refuse to have either of you leave.” He practically glowers at me. “Understood?”

Beeeeeeeep. Beeeeeeeep.

Killian doesn’t blink. Doesn’t twitch a muscle as he waits for my response.

“Understood?” Killian repeats. Slowly. Menacingly.

Uh, wow. Who knew you needed to be such a badass to run a hotel?

Focus, Amara!

“Yes.” I nod.

“Good.”

Two minutes later, Killian pulls over in front of my shop.

“Thanks for the ride,” I tell Killian with my hand on the door handle. “And for letting me crash.”

“You’re moving in, not *crashing*,” he reminds me as I unfold myself from the car, grabbing my bag.

“It’s temporary.” It’s my turn to remind him.

Killian doesn’t answer. I see it as my cue to slam the door and head to work. I’m halfway to my shop when I hear the Bentley’s window rolling down.

I stop, but I don’t turn to him, too scared of what might come next. Scared of how much I want it. How much I want Carter here for it.

“Amara.” His stern tone forces me to look over my shoulder. “Stay safe, beautiful girl.”

With another nod, I clutch the strap of my bag tighter. I unlock the door of my shop to the sound of a rumbling motor. Of a car pulling out and onto the road.

Surrounded by my flowers, I’m finally able to breathe.

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

Carter

People, when they're angry, are truly the purest form of entertainment.

"Five minutes and twenty-eight seconds." Tom Willis tears at the short strands of his brown hair. His blue eyes show his rage behind his horn-rimmed glasses. "Being five minutes and twenty-eight seconds late to a crime scene in the middle of nowhere does not give him the right to deduct my fee."

I rub my jaw, leaning back in my leather chair. The three of us—Tom, the dead bodies' cleaner, his client, Rhett, and me—sit around the oval table in one of Voltage's conference rooms.

I grin from ear to ear, enjoying this little show I'm running.

"The hell it does," Rhett *Razor* Martin, the drug dealer for the decadent wealthy people of the Upper West Side, snarls. "It could've been a second. Could've been an hour. Doesn't change the fact that you were late."

"It was less than six minutes." Much like me, Willis is used to dealing with dirtbags like Razor here. Hitmen, serial killers, and other types of filthy criminals, he's seen them all. He doesn't cower. "It means nothing. Nothing."

One of the most sought-after cleaners in New York has a point.

I'm here as a mediator who was given the power to resolve this shit. I can do it, right here and now. In less than five minutes and twenty-eight seconds.

Matter of fact, I can do it in less than one.

Except I'm way too fucking entertained.

Doesn’t hurt that watching them takes my mind off last night.

Normally, I don’t trouble myself with overthinking. Complicated emotions and what stands behind them bores me to tears.

That is until Amara’s crazy soul latched on to mine. She softens the hardened parts in me. Makes me almost…care.

It confuses me. Last night confuses me even more.

Sure, the sex was fucking epic. Being dirty with my Amara like a man possessed while Killian watched was the best sex of my life.

But it didn’t stop there. When I bathed Amara, I wished Killian were there with us. She deserved his strong, caring touch for being such a good girl. I wanted him to lather shampoo in my hair. The three of us could’ve—*Christ, what’s come over me?*—cuddled.

I didn’t articulate any of this.

See, I don’t pray for what’s out of my reach. I don’t lament. I don’t grow attached.

Hence, why it’s basically therapy, sitting here, soaking up these fuckers’ rage.

Chaos. Madness. Violence.

That I can do.

“I specifically told you to be there at nine p.m. sharp.” The vein on Razor’s temple throbs. His bald head shines bright red, more crimson than the red lights in our conference room. “On. The. Dot.”

He’ll probably be mad if I snapped a picture of him. If I laughed. I pull my lips in, taking a mental picture instead. One can never have enough entertainment on demand.

“Wanna know why?” Razor’s fingers grip the arms of the chair. His muscles threaten to tear his charcoal gray suit.

The asshole gets off on pretending he’s a legit businessman just because he runs in the right circles. Because he sells “rich people” drugs.

Oh, fucking well.

I’m not here to pass judgment. Don’t care for it, either. I’m here to watch and fix their issues.

Right after I’ve had my fill of this distracting chaos.

I relax into my executive chair, crossing my arms over my chest. Too bad it’s this early in the morning. Otherwise, I would’ve asked the hotel staff for popcorn.

“Why?” Willis pinches his lips, feigning courage.

By the way he’s twisting his gray polo shirt beneath the table, I know better. He’s losing his nerve.

I’m here to protect him, but Razor is a psycho. Before he showed up, Willis gave me a recap of what he had to pick up off the floor last night. A guy’s broken teeth and a discarded eyeball. For poaching Razor’s clients.

It didn’t intimidate me. Just gave me another reason to hide my soft spot from him and everyone else.

Except my Amara.

“Well?” Willis gives his false bravado another shot. The hint of quiver in his voice whips my attention back to them. “Are you going to sit there and stare all day?”

Willis huffs. Razor growls. Nothing they have on Netflix could ever top this shit right here.

“My wife.” Razor leans forward, placing his forearms on the table. “It was my in-laws’ golden motherfucking anniversary. With traffic and you breaching our agreement, I was late.”

He doesn’t have to say another word. The second growl he lets out makes it pretty fucking clear. His wife—his real boss—gave him hell for this.

Good on her.

They continue to yammer on. Traffic, schedule, being respectful. Whatever.

I lose interest.

They’re still angry. Still entertaining. But my eyes hone in on the porcelain vase with the white lilies in the middle of the conference table. Amara.

Never in a million years would I have imagined she’d be like this. That she’d be begging for both Killian and me. The adorable little flower girl I ran into six months ago has such a dirty mind.

“Excuse me, I’m new here.” A woman whose face was hidden by two giant lily arrangements approached me. Practically bumped into me. “Can you tell me where they’d like me to put these? I can’t find anyone”— she giggled—“more like, can’t see anyone behind these.”

Interesting. This wasn’t the old dude—forgot his name, shit happens—who used to deliver the hotel’s flowers.

Oh, right. Reece, our purchasing manager, informed me the dude had moved on to bigger and better things.

As in died.

Meaning I have a new toy to play with.

Normally, people steered as far away from me as possible.

Flipping my knife between my fingers or my psycho smile weren't exactly inviting.

I hadn't laid a finger on any of our suppliers—for no reason, anyway.

This girl was different. I couldn't see her. Other than the skirt and the long sleeves of her red dress with the bone prints on it, that is. I squinted my eyes and there, a button nose and red lips peeking between the vases.

That wasn't enough. I craved for more. Wanted to make her melodic voice a hoarse one after she choked on my cock.

Only after I toyed with her.

No. After I helped *her.*

For once, I didn't care if anyone witnessed me on my best behavior.

My twisted heart needed to be her savior. Her dark, perverted knight.

"Did you go?" Her head shifted to the side, trying to catch a glimpse of me.

She couldn't, with how big those vases were. Even though we were in the lobby of the hotel and she only just walked in, I got pissed off no one offered her help.

I'd have murdered our entire staff for ignoring her. Except Killian wouldn't have been pleased.

"I'm here." My dress shoes clanked on the black and gold granite floors and I opened my arms out. "Let me carry these for you."

Lauren, our head housekeeper, tilted her head as she walked toward us. Finally, someone here decided to be useful.

"I'll take it from here." Her voice had a lilt to it. The middle-aged, gray-haired woman was afraid of my reaction. Not for herself.

For the mysterious flower girl.

"I have this." No way was anyone monopolizing the Flower Girl's time. It was mine.

Mine.

"Oh, wow, everyone's so nice around here." Flower girl spread out her fingers, allowing me to grab the vases.

If she only knew.

Lauren patted the front of her black uniform shirt and mouthed, "Conference room number three." Then she spun on her heel, leaving us be.

“Thank you,” Flower Girl sang to me.

I moved the vases to one side to peek at my new toy.

Behind stems and flowers, in the dimly lit lobby of our hotel, I checked her out.

The most beautiful human being I’d ever come across.

Her blond hair was knotted in two messy buns at her nape. Her brown eyes twinkled. Dark, thick eyelashes fluttered. I had a full view of her painted red pillowy lips and I was moments from biting them.

Toy? Fuck, no.

My woman. That was settled. I decided right then and there that she’d be mine.

At that point—after three long years of wanting a man I couldn’t have—I gave up on Killian and me ever happening. I had to move on.

This girl was…she was something.

She was mine.

And not in the fuck-her-and-leave-her way.

I wanted to peel her skin with my pocket knife. Reveal layer after layer of her all by myself. To close my fingers around her beating heart to make her understand it belonged to me.

“Are lilies supposed to be this goddamn heavy?” I frowned at the tone of my voice. Why was I being an asshole? I wasn’t mad at her.

It was the others that pissed me off.

She was half my size. Someone should’ve been there. Helping her. Shit, I hadn’t known this woman for the whole of three seconds and she had me by the balls. Squeezing hard. Owning me.

“You’re funny.” She grinned, forcing me to blink. Such a huge smile, like the moon was shining directly in my eyes. “The lilies aren’t heavy. That’s the small rocks you asked me to add to the bottom of the vases.”

“Rocks? Why would anyone need—” I stopped myself when it came back to me.

Brenn, one of our bigger members, had launched himself across the conference table last week. The dumbass knocked off the vase, and the porcelain vase hit Johanna, his goddamn sister. Nearly made her bleed out.

“Gotcha, pet.” I winked at her and went in for one final test to see if my instincts were right about this one.

I flashed her my psycho smile.

She blushed. Fucking blushed.

Mine.

“Follow me.” Satisfied, I whipped around and marched toward conference room three.

“Wait, I have more in my truck,” the girl called behind me. “Are you going to call someone to help?”

The girl.

I tasted it on my lips again and it sounded all wrong. Pet was okay, but something was missing.

“What’s your name?” I asked.

For the first time, her eyes raked across my body. She moved to the side to watch me behind the vases. Took in my black suit.

Her eyebrows pinched. Her red lips rounded in the hottest O shape. Her cheeks, on the other hand, lost their color.

Something upset her. I didn’t like that. So, I frowned.

Not my brightest move.

“Oh, no. Oh, shit.” She clasped her fingers around the vases, trying to pull them from me. Like that would fucking happen. “You don’t work here. You’re a guest. Don’t tell me I harassed a guest. Give them back, I’m so sorry, I didn’t mean to.”

“I’m not—”

“Shit, shit, shit.” Through a tirade of more shits, *she flung her arms around the vases, tugging on them harder. “Give them back, please. I apologize. So fucking sorry.”*

This tiny yet aggressive girl hugged the ceramic vases. Inadvertently, she stroked my suit jacket with her fingertips. Set fire to my arms.

I could’ve let her stay glued to me like this forever. Problem was, we were center stage to the beasts also known as our members. I couldn’t let them witness my swelling cock.

To get to me, they would hurt her the first chance they got.

“Calm down,” I whispered. “I’m not a guest.”

We had to get out of here and to the conference room. Into a closed space where I could put the vases aside and touch her. Her slender neck. Her inviting lips. I’d eat up the intoxicating jasmine scent on her skin. Sink my teeth into her flesh.

“Let’s go.” The command in my voice shut down her arguments. “Conference room. Where those belong. I’ll come back for the rest, so stop

fretting over it before I lick the blush off your pretty cheeks. Now, what's your real name?"

Despite my kinky threat, her blush remained. Persistent little thing. Just like her.

The girl dipped her chin and gazed up at me beneath her eyelashes.

Fuck. Me.

"Amara Carmichael." Sex flowed from her pores and threatened to choke me. I would've died a happy man. "You're not Reece. Not a guest. So, who are you?"

Telling her I was one of the two hotel owners would've had her mouth rounding again. I wanted to see that. But it would've had to be for my eyes only. Mine and no one else's.

Meaning that would have to wait for when the two of us are alone.

I took a step back from the adorable clingy temptation—Amara—and started stalking forward. Her heeled boots clinked as she caught up with me.

"Who are you?"

"I'm Carter Steele," I said when we turned into a dimly lit hallway, away from prying eyes. Her bouncy buns appeared at my side. "One of the hotel owners."

I trained my eyes on her lips. Waiting.

Amara Carmichael, the woman of my dreams, screeched in her tracks at the conference room's doorway. Lips parting, just as I predicted. Just as I wished.

"Oh, no. I'm sorry," she repeated the unnecessary apology. "So sorry."

This time, I didn't stop her. I placed the vases in the center of the oval table and turned to her.

My silent reply was answered by her rushing into the room and closing the door behind her.

Clink, clink, clink, *her sexy heels went.*

"You shouldn't have been carrying these." She outstretched her arms between me and the vase, flailing them around. Amara was the definition of hysterical and adorable. "It's my job. Jesus. I fucked up. I fucked up so bad. Please, don't fire me. I'll do better. I swear."

Her jasmine scent once more invaded my senses, getting me hard. Driving me insane in the best sort of way.

"Relax." I grabbed her shoulders and turned her to me.

The fabric of her dress felt smooth under my hands. We were inches apart.

What if I kept her for life?

I'd probably end up choking her so she wouldn't breathe anything other than my exhales.

This woman.

The only thing similar to this level of attraction was what I'd felt for Killian.

These feelings. *The need to shove my hand into his sweatpants. To have my lips on his.*

Like I wanted to kiss Amara. She wasn't second best, though. I couldn't make sense of that thought at the time. The two of them snagged the same place in my head. Coexisted in the space where possessiveness met another sentiment. Lust. Had to be lust.

After two and a half years of jerking off to Killian and not seeing anyone else, I was losing it.

Liar. There's something about her. Something you only ever saw in Killian.

A growl slipped past my lips. That was the truth. No use in pretending otherwise.

This girl had me in a chokehold.

Amara's nose twitched. Another adorable, seductive gesture.

I tipped her chin up. "What is it?"

"Carter, I swear, I'm not lazy." Her begging turned me on as much as the heaving breasts beneath her tight dress. "I'll carry the rest of the flowers in. In fact, I'll come every other day to water the plants you already have here. I'll sing for them and stroke the flower petals. Please, I'll do anything. Just don't take this gig from me."

"Lazy? Take it from you?" I scowled. She wasn't making any sense. Her craziness was cute, but this? Unnecessary. "Never. I'll never hire another florist. You're bound to us. Bound to me. That's why we're going to date."

"You… Me… Uh—excuse me?" A range of emotions ran across her expressive features. "For real?"

"Yes, pet. For real."

If there was ever a time to break the rules, it was now. For her.

Amara was mine.

I leaned a little closer. “Say yes,” I whispered, tasting her breaths. Owning them.

The tips of our noses touched. I nuzzled hers.

Sweet, sweet Amara.

“Say yes.”

“To what?” she breathed.

In a flash, I had my hand around her throat, my fingers digging in.

“To everything.” Not that her consent mattered. The night sky was black as Amara belonged to me. End of story.

“Yes.” Amara’s smile barreled into me. “To everything.”

Having her consent was the cherry on top.

The wait was over.

My last conscious thought fleeting through my head was, We’re a match made in crazy-town, and I fucking love it. *I slammed my mouth against hers. Sealed our fates together with that kiss.*

Then I fucked her from behind with her face pressed to the table and her ass red from my spanking.

“Five minutes and twenty-eight seconds,” Willis repeats.

I have the urge to smother him for dragging me out of my head. Where Amara was screaming into my palm as I shut her up and made it hurt until she came all over my cock.

An urge I have to shut down.

I’m at work. My boner and goddamn feelings will have to wait.

“It’s three hundred and twenty-eight seconds too late,” Razor bites back.

I turn my head to either side of me. The two men are standing now. Their palms are flat on the table where Amara’s face was six months ago. Their faces burn crimson red, their mouths twisted into snarls.

Seeing Razor’s pulsing violence doesn’t surprise me. My eyebrow ticks up, intrigued by the sudden change in Willis. He leans forward, his energy as explosive as Razor’s.

Fine, then maybe this isn’t the worst thing to come back to from my Amara memory.

“Tell him he needs to pay up, Carter.”

“Tell him being late fucking costs you.”

Do I let them keep this up, or do I finally put an end to this charade?

Decisions, decisions.

I check my watch. Killian should be here soon.

His reaction to what happened last night is far more intriguing than this pay-per-view show these two men put on.

I have to see the effect Amara and I had on Killian. If I have something to work with here.

It won't happen if I tell him to join us. Killian doesn't respond well to commands. The man needs a push in the right direction, and I'm the master of pushing. Buttons, for example. Or people. Off a cliff. It happened once. I was in a creative mood. Sue me.

Back to the real world.

The decision is final. Their duel needs to end.

While the two men are busy pretending they're John Travolta and Nicolas Cage in *Face Off*, I smile.

Hand inside my pocket, my fingers curl around my trustworthy Cyclone. I slip the pocket knife out as the idiots here roar at each other. Focused on their petty back and forth.

I swear, sometimes I wonder if these people know me at all.

Razor screams first as my blade tears into the tissues and tendons of his hand.

Willis, the coward, pushes his chair back. Ready to escape.

The fuck he will.

"I bet you'd like that. Running like a fucking coward." I fist the collar of his polo shirt, relishing in how he stumbles toward me. The *thump* his body makes as he hits the table. "You're staying right here. Both of you."

Razor shuts the hell up.

Willis is a different story. "We didn't break any rules," he whines.

"You think I'm blind?" My smile doesn't leave me as I drag the cleaner's face close to mine. "Is that what you're saying, Willis?"

His face blanches. "N-no, Carter. I'm sorry."

"Another second, and you'd have been at each other's throats. Breaking. Our. Rules. Consider this your final warning." I turn to the choked, silent Razor. "You. Ten thousand out of the forty you settled on is a goddamn quarter. You're alive and your wife didn't put a bullet into you. So, no, 10k isn't a fair fine. You owe Willis another five. That's it."

"Sure, Carter." Razor, the big intimidating man, quivers. "Anything you say."

"Just five?" Willis has the nerve to sound outraged. "Carter, you can't be serious."

Bang.

The table shakes when I slam Willis's head on top of it.

I pull him up, and my smile widens. The blood on his forehead and his moist eyes are what I live for. "You're gonna tell me what I can or can't be?"

"N-no, of course not. I'm sorry, Carter."

I smell his fear and it turns me into a fucking ravenous beast. I want more. I want my people.

"You should thank your lucky stars." I release Willis and pull my knife out of Razor's hand. "Scratch that. You should thank *me* that I didn't do worse."

"T-thank you," he says wisely.

"Stay," I address both of them. I pull the knife out of Razor's hand, grab Willis's jacket from his chair, and throw it at Razor. "Use this to slow the bleeding. Now, get the fuck out of here. Both of you."

They scramble to the door. Neither of them can get away from me fast enough. They're scared of me. For the time being.

I snatch a sanitizing wipe from the box near Amara's flowers.

Amara.

One day, Willis and Razor will remember this moment. Revenge will poison their veins like many others before them. They might even try something.

Killian and I are basically the UN in this fucked up criminal world. The UN, not Miss fucking Congeniality. Never have, never will be. To be feared and respected, we've been terrorizing these assholes for years. Killian has been doing it long before I came along.

They might hurt Amara if they find out about her. Someone might've already done that. Last night won't repeat itself. I won't let it.

My protective side rages. I'm a caged lion, itching to tear someone's throat using my bare teeth.

Without telling Amara that the man she loves has blood on his hands, I can't show her off around here. Can't lick her neck in public. Dare anyone but Killian to look at what's mine.

What could be ours.

She wouldn't have her guard up around these beasts. They would use it to their advantage. Hurt her as soon as we turn our heads.

I'm not ready to tell her. It'll take time. Everything will.

I’ll have to play it right, whether Killian joins our fun or not.

My smile is wiped off my face. I wipe my knife and toss it on the table.

Fuck.

Love is a blessing.

Love is a weakness.

“Morning.” The bass voice reaches from behind me. “Your toys make it out alive?”

A hot current runs down my spine hearing Killian. Smelling his cologne. Feeling his all-consuming aura.

Guess I’m not pissed off anymore.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

Carter

"Well?" Killian probes when I don't say a word.

Slowly, seductively, I turn to him.

Dressed in one of our signature black suits and his dark, penetrating glare, Killian exudes dominance. His arms are crossed over his broad chest, not a strand of hair slipping out of his carefully styled dirty blond hairstyle.

A strange notion hits me. I'm not mad or jealous of him for being with Amara. In a car. By himself.

I'm possessive as fuck when it comes to her. Bradley and the dude from yesterday are a prime example of that. In Killian's case, though, I feel none of that.

He gave her a ride, and I liked it. I offered it to him.

Enough of that sentimental bullshit.

I have to get a good read on him.

I take my time studying his expression. Try to dig some sort of emotion from the carefully constructed wall he wears so well.

He tilts his head. Other than that, he gives me nothing.

Whatever goes on behind that dark gaze is a secret. One I'll have to work hard to unravel.

Gotta love a challenge.

"They left here breathing." I perch my ass on the table. A sinister smirk forms on my lips, my fingers rubbing my knife's handle. "The job is done. They couldn't refuse the solution I offered."

“I see.” He looks around me at the crimson blotches on the table. “We need Lauren’s team here.”

“We do.”

My smirk falters. I wish Amara would accept me the way Killian does. I think she will. But the stupid doubts stemming from the stupid feeling eat me the fuck up.

A veil descends over Killian’s gaze. If possible, he just turned more unreadable. More guarded.

He won’t open up about last night. About what it meant to him. To us.

The room reeks of secrets. Of toxicity. Of desires that have been repressed for far too long.

This game we’re playing just got a whole lot more interesting. Because sometimes, pushing means staying silent and watching the madness unfold.

And it does. Ever the sly and elegant, Killian reaches back to shut the door to the conference room.

He takes a step forward, then two.

He doesn’t come any closer, though.

I don’t move forward. Despite the sexual energy crackling in the air, I won’t act on it.

Without Amara here, it’s like we’re missing a limb.

I’d rather have my dick cut off and fed to the hungry wolves outside these doors than cheat on her. Killian and I won’t be touching each other when her pretty face and sassy energy aren’t here.

However, we need to talk.

“How’s Amara?” I kill two birds with one stone. First, it’s a reminder that she’ll always be a part of me. Second, I’m directing our conversation to yesterday.

A nuclear bomb goes off behind Killian’s eyes. He understands damn well the double meaning.

Or is that something happened to Amara? She looked fine last night. Slept peacefully this morning. Then again, she could’ve woken up differently. She could’ve felt the full weight of what went down in her apartment.

While I wasn’t there.

While I was here, playing games.

Dammit.

I push off the table, determined to storm past Killian and go to her. To yank her into my arms, steal her away, and let Opal handle the shop today.

I'd hug the trauma out of her. *Fuck* the trauma out of her.

My pet.

"Easy there." A strong, muscular arm raises horizontally. Killian's bicep collides with my chest.

My head whips to him, my lust gone. There's only anger there.

He's in my way.

"Let me through," I hiss.

Amara isn't his, not the way she's mine. Doesn't matter if she wasn't well, he should've stayed.

I don't tell him any of that. This isn't about us. It's about her. About getting to her.

"I'm going to see her." I shove his arm. He shoves me right back. Dick. My brow furrows as I level him, my gaze murderous. "You didn't have to say it for me to understand she's going through something. I won't let her go through it alone."

"You got it all wrong. She's good," Killian reassures me, and I stop fighting him. "She's strong, but it's more than that. You were there to help when it mattered. You killed him."

When I pull back, our gazes clash. He's had it figured out. Of course, he has.

"Any of our detectives came back with a lead?" Killian's voice is harder than a diamond. Stating a fact that he's had figured out as well.

That part surprises me even less. Killian and I are protective of what's ours. Territorial to a fault. No one fucks with what's ours and gets away.

And Amara is ours.

"I have his name. Charlie Smith. He could be known as Chuck." The name tastes worse than dirt on my tongue. "I have men on it. Texted them as soon as Amara fell asleep last night. They've been to his apartment, and they're digging as much shit as they can on him. So far, they came back with nothing other than he's a nobody."

"Okay." The fact that I'm handling this soothes Killian's rage. Now that it's settled, he looks at the space over my shoulder, jerking his chin. "Let's sit. We have more to discuss."

We won't be discussing last night, that's for goddamn sure. This is business. It's always business.

I move alongside him as we descend to the seats at the other end of the table. Both of us avoid Razor's blood that's dripping from the table to the

marble floor. Killian doesn't even scrunch his nose at the smell.

He's used to it. As am I.

"What's up?" I cross my ankle over my knee, steepling my fingers. "Any messes need cleaning up? Now's a good time." My eyes slide to the constant *tap, tap, tap* of Razor's blood. "I'm on a roll."

"Not done talking about Amara," he says. "Is it possible you've been followed? Have you sensed something? Anything?"

"Let me get this straight." His words strip me of any shred of amusement I may have had left. Indignance simmers beneath my skin. "You're calling me reckless? With Amara's life?"

"No." A simple statement. A Killian sort of statement. "I'm sure you've been discreet. I'm aware of how much you care for her."

Fucking love her. Much like I love you. Two things I'll never admit to, simply because I don't know how.

"You don't need me telling you how vindictive the members here are." Killian drags his chair toward mine, lowering his voice another octave. "We have to get ahead of this. And for that I need you to think."

Out of fucking nowhere, he rests one hand on my knee.

This doesn't happen in our small family of two. We don't do hugs or pats on the back.

I'm a stranger to this type of intimacy. Amara does that, but not Killian. Never him.

The touch takes me by surprise. I stare at where his hand's at. I feel its warmth seeping through my pants.

And I do nothing.

I thought I was ready for this moment. I'm not. I'm not equipped to deal with these fucking feelings. Not halfway prepared for the shot of arousal to my groin.

A groan rises in my throat, and my molars grind to shut the damn thing down. The choked sound and my silence get Killian's attention back to my face and thank fuck for that.

This isn't the time or place for him to see my cock straining in my slacks.

"I *have* thought this through." Going for the casual look, I shrug. "Nothing. Nothing's felt off. I've been hyper-vigilant the few times we spent the night outside or when I'd visit her at her shop."

"I'm sure you have." He levels me with his penetrating gaze.

That’s his love language. Harsh and meaningful deep glares. The people he dislikes—basically everyone other than me and recently Amara—get something else. They get a chilling blank stare.

“Whoever’s behind it—if there’s someone behind it at all—will pay for what they did.”

“That’s great, Carter.”

His nearness, his hand on my knee, the dark shadows on his jaw… it confuses me.

“No one touches Amara and gets to enjoy another breath,” I go for the truth. For words that wouldn’t mean something else. “No one.”

“I’m proud of you.”

Four words. Four words and my mouth clamps shut.

This isn’t the first time he’s said this to me. After yesterday, though, they hit differently. A whole fucking lot.

My jaw works, and I want to tear his hand off of me. I want to tear it off so I can get on my knees and thank him for his praise.

I’m a dominant through and through, always have been. Never switched. Never considered switching. But I will take Killian’s cock up my ass. In my mouth.

When we’re together. When he’ll be soaked with Amara’s arousal. She’ll play with me while I suck him off. The perfect little trio.

Time slows as we stare into each other’s eyes. His are as firm as the flat line of his lips.

Neither Killian nor I speak. We don’t need to. The charged energy in the room does all the talking for us.

He inches closer. I smell the mint on his breath. Every hair of his groomed stubble. Each thick, dark eyelash.

I won’t let him kiss me. I won’t pull away either. I can’t. He pulls me in. Has me in a chokehold.

Move away. Move the fuck away. You have a woman. Remember her? Ama—

“Flower delivery.”

What a surprise. A pleasant one. A *needed* one.

As if summoned by my thoughts, Amara’s voice emerges into the room. She doesn’t knock. Doesn’t have to when the staff told her we’re here.

My sweet, naughty girl didn’t mention she’d be here early. Probably didn’t want any of us joining on her deliveries.

I completely forgot she was supposed to come in today. By the look of shock on Killian's face, so had he.

The three of us are in the same room. With Killian and me hot and ready to fuck. My Amara who wants us—both of us.

Her sweet presence snaps me out of my trance. Stirs my desire to play and wreak havoc.

We're doing this.

This is the time.

Right here. Right now.

She doesn't notice me holding Killian's hand. Her entire focus is fixed on my face. Only me. For the time being. Soon enough, I'll have to share her.

Happily, when the man who'll learn to love her is Killian.

A smile splits her cheeks in half when I fix her with one of my depraved stares. "Hey, muffin."

"Hey, A." My eyes betray nothing as I wait for her to look around the room. I already have my excuse ready for the blood. One of the cleaning crew stumbled on her heels and hit her head.

Easy.

"Don't worry, Carter, I brought the wagon you got me." She still has her entire focus locked on my face. "I'm not carrying anything heavy."

"Good girl."

Killian moves to rip his hand from its place on my knee. I'm faster, slamming my hand on top of his.

While Amara repeats that I don't need to freak out, I cut my eyes to Killian. I arch a challenging eyebrow, squeezing his hand tighter. His expression turns murderous.

I smile back, pleased as fuck.

A minute goes by before silence takes over the room.

I return my gaze to Amara. Her hand drops from the wagon's handle. Her brown eyes swirl with desire and doubt. They dart between us, suddenly realizing what she's stepped into. How our world will change once she closes the distance between us.

With so many questions. Ones I'm eager to answer.

"Shut the door behind you," I instruct her, and she does. "Good girl."

Killian says nothing. It won't be long before he does. Until then, I'm running this show.

"Pet, come here, baby."

Her jaw slacks. Her body stills.
It’s a mess. And I’ve never felt more alive than I do at this moment.

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Amara

Feelings.

So many of them. Assaulting me left and right.

Curiosity. Desire. The need to be good for Carter. The impulse to break the rules.

All of them pummel into me at once, leaving me dizzy.

There's one thing I'm definitely *not* feeling.

Well, two. First, I don't care for the blood dripping from the table. I have tripped and fallen over a harsh surface and split my chin open. It happens.

Second is, I'm not jealous.

Even though there's no telling what I just walked into, I can sense how intimate their interaction is. It's in the air. It's how they sit together. In a closed room. Touching.

And I'm. Not. Jealous.

Shocker.

I'm happy. Ecstatic. This is happening.

Carter grabs Killian's hand. Killian's broad shoulders are squared, and he keeps his focus trained on Carter. He's looking at him the same way he looks at me sometimes.

Carter said it's the look that means Killian *needs*.

Oh, Killian's fixing me with this glare now.

There's no apology behind his eyes. There's also no mistaking the wickedness on Carter's face.

The depravity.

The invitation.

The command.

I'm positive neither of them was about to do anything dirty while I was gone. They seem as if they've been holding back. Restraining their desires.

No need anymore.

I'm here.

I nibble on my bottom lip, ambling toward them. Giving each man equal amount of my attention.

Each step is calculated. Seductive. Teasing.

"Enough." Killian's warning thunders in the closed room.

My body reacts, and I stop in my tracks, less than a foot from Carter's chair. Carter just tilts his head at Killian.

The older man shakes himself out of Carter's hold. When Killian rises to his full, impressive height, he's towering over his stepson and me.

I don't miss the way Carter sends me one of his attractive, unhinged grins before turning his gaze up to Killian.

The confidence dripping from Carter is infectious. It injects courage into my veins. Bad thoughts into my head.

Neither of us says a word. A whole fucking lot is being communicated between us, anyway. In the silence.

Last night happened. The three of us are aware of it. The three of us feel it.

I'm breathing heavily. My heart's doing all sorts of crazy things in its cage.

"Come here," Carter repeats his request, outstretching his arm to me.

Hesitantly, I peek at Killian. At his fiercely snapped shut lips. The thick hard-on in his pants that he doesn't bother adjusting. Much like Carter.

Wetness soaks through my panties. A shiver runs up my spine.

The room screams of sex and debauchery. Exactly what Carter and I talked about yesterday. The longer I stay in place, the more likely it is that the moment will be ruined.

No.

The last foot disappears beneath my feet as I hop into Carter's welcoming arm.

Our movements and needs are in tune with each other. My body melds into his arm, and he hooks it around me, pulling me into his lap.

My legs hang over his side, my shoulder presses into his familiar chest.

“Good girl,” he praises, though he isn’t looking at me.

He’s staring up at Killian. I follow him, extending Killian the same silent invitation.

There could be hell to pay if we keep this up. Confusion could come between the three of us. A heart would break. Hearts, maybe.

Still…

Carter’s dick pokes my ass. Killian’s hard-on is very obvious. There’s no world outside this moment. Nothing could be wrong when it feels so fucking right.

For a moment, I let my mind wander.

Killian might let me brush my fingers over his length while Carter relieves him of his belt. I could unzip him, then Carter would take him out. Carter and I could suck Killian together. Kiss while we’re licking his cock.

It would be perfect.

“Amara,” Killian warns. “Sitting in Carter’s lap here is inappropriate. You know better.”

Gone is the Killian from last night. From this morning in the car. From a second ago.

This is the old Killian. He won’t be persuaded to lose his inhibitions. His impenetrable walls are erected. There won’t be breaking through them.

Any witty response I might have had dies at the realization. Carter senses the change in me. He presses me to him in a comforting, possessive hug. His stubbled cheek brushes my soft one. His warmth bleeds into my frozen body.

“The door’s closed.” He seethes, raising a hand to stroke my swollen temple.

“Closed, not locked,” Killian counters. “Anyone might come in here and see the two of you.”

Us. He means the *three* of us.

I don’t correct him, though. I get Killian’s message loud and fucking clear.

We’re not just inappropriate. He’s embarrassed of us.

Pain slices into my soul. Lead settles in my stomach. My head starts pounding with how hurt I am. I’ve been an idiot to believe after this morning I could mean something more to him.

I don’t belong here.

Carter doesn’t let me get away when I try to get up. I turn to him, my eyes imploring him to let me go. His dark eyebrows knit.

“Killian’s right.” I kiss his cheek, forcing a smile. “I should get going. You know how Opal hates being at the shop by herself.”

Killian says nothing. He doesn’t move to leave, either.

Carter doesn’t look at him. His eyes are on me. His thumb strokes the underside of my breast. Right over my bra. The affectionate touch normally brings me to my knees. Literally.

When Killian’s irritated figure doesn’t loom over us. When he doesn’t glower, indicating we should wrap it up.

“Later.” My lips return to kiss Carter’s cheek, my nose inhaling the sandalwood cologne and his manly scent. “We’ll have the whole night to ourselves, sleeping buddy. Unless you’re working late.”

I should’ve gotten an Oscar for this, I swear. Carter believes my award-winning performance, offering me a hint of a smile.

“No, pet, I won’t be working late.”

His eyes tell me what his lips don’t. That I shouldn’t worry over Killian’s reaction. That he has this.

Whatever *this* is.

“Text me and I’ll come pick you up when you close the shop.” He ignores Killian’s intense energy, brushing an errant strand of my hair behind my ear. “Then we’ll take everything you need from your apartment and come home.” The way he says the last word, it’s like he’s sending a message to Killian, who’s moved to stand in the doorway

I’m getting up when his words sink in. “I have *my* truck. I can do all that.”

“You can forget about the truck,” Killian clips. “You won’t be leaving the shop alone at night.”

Carter pinches my waist lightly as if saying *I told you so*. I blink at Killian, confused as fuck. So he does care?

“Until we’re sure the man from last night doesn’t have plans to come back”—his stance is wide, his expression determined—“we’re taking you to and from work. The deliveries are fine. Leaving when he could hide in the shadows is not.”

I swallow around the lump in my throat. First, Killian almost let us both suck him off. Then, he couldn’t get away from Carter and me fast enough. Now, he’s back to talking about solo car rides.

Another one of these whiplashes and my head will fly right off my neck.

"No. I'll take my truck." I scoff. They can't keep driving me crazy. I won't allow it. I wiggle out of Carter's grip and stand up, my hands on my hips. "I never park far from the shop. And I've been handling myself for years. I don't need your help."

"You'll have it anyway, Amara." Killian's icy façade thaws. A little.

"Pet." Carter's large hand squeezes my ass, and I yelp.

The sound of his chair dragging along the floor alerts me that he's standing up. He comes to stand before me, blocking my view of Killian. He is so close that I'm forced to look up to see him.

When Carter directs his focus at me like that, he owns me. He controls the air I breathe. Holds my heart in his hand, dictating how fast it beats.

"Yes, Carter?" I ask, breathless.

"You won't fight us on this." His gray eyes say a million things I can't decipher. His knuckles graze my cheek. His fingers grip my chin. "Unless you want to be chained in the bathroom. You'd look so pretty. Our little naked prisoner waiting for us to get back from work every day."

I melt. He always knows the right thing to say.

When he kisses me, I wrap my arms around his neck. The door shuts quietly behind Killian. My chest tightens a fraction at that.

"Amara." Carter folds me into his embrace, yanking me to the warmth of his body. "Promise me one thing."

My eyebrows shoot up. "Anything."

"Remember what I told you about Killian." His fingers flex on my back, his forehead pressing to mine. He's hugging me, in the hotel, where anyone can see. "He's struggling. Doesn't mean he's angry or hates you."

"I'm not so sure about that."

"You promised." He bites my nose. "Now, get to work before I have to spank you for being a bad flower girl."

"You're tempting me." I tilt my head to steal a kiss.

"Oh, trust me." In a flash, Carter's fingers curl around my throat. "I'm really fucking tempted too. I…"

He sucks in a deep breath. I stop breathing altogether.

You love me. Just say it.

"I'll see you this evening." He squeezes my throat one last time, groans, and storms away.

I still don't breathe easier when he's gone.

• • • • • • • • •

The bell on the door to Carnations chimes when I walk in. “Hey, Opal.”

“Amara,” Opal calls to me from her place at the counter.

I don’t actually see her. Only her tattooed arms, hands and fingers since she’s hidden behind a monstrous flower arrangement.

“Finally,” she grumbles.

Warmth makes my heart flutter as I let my eyes roam over the rest of the shop. More arrangements of the same flowers—blue hydrangeas and bellflowers—are scattered on the floor. They’re so pretty, thanks to her. The extremely talented and introverted Opal.

“The arrangements have turned out incredible.” I run my hand along the flower petals, lending into the peace they offer. This day has been chaotic, even for me. “The guests for tomorrow’s wedding are going to come in their pants when they see this. That’s how fucking stunning it is.”

Seeing Georgia’s catalog in Carter’s home gave me a near heart attack. The morning after, I woke up with a sense of mission. I decided to take proactive measures that’d keep my shop afloat. I had to branch out.

My heart was set on offering my services as a wedding supplier.

I would’ve done it by myself, except my aesthetic sense was nonexistent. I was great at growing flowers and plants. Giving them the best conditions to thrive and to be the best version of themselves.

Arrangements? Pfft. Better ask me to tell the difference between a butter knife and a kitchen knife.

That was where Opal came in. My wedding department of one woman. My lifesaver. On her first week here, one of her relatives got married and we landed that gig. Ever since, the word has spread. I’ve been keeping her busy filling orders while I’ve been doing pretty much everything else.

Including the few walk-in clients that give her anxiety.

It’s safe to say that the two of us complete each other. My only sort of a friend.

“You said you’d be gone for an hour.” She peeks at me, her large brown eyes wide behind her oversized glasses.

I’m a weirdo around people. I own that. Love that. Opal, though, she can’t do strangers at all. Working the register spikes her anxiety. She

doesn’t want to fail me, which is impossible, but she doesn’t believe me when I say that. So I stopped.

“It’s been two.” One of her long, thick blond braids drapes over her shoulder, and she rearranges it behind her back nervously. “And this one person walked in.”

Poor girl. I thought my early encounter with Killian was awkward. Looking at her, I see I wasn’t the only one struggling.

“Got held up.” I force a smile on my face. Carter promised things would be okay, that Killian doesn’t hate me. I need to believe him. “Did they get anything?”

“No. He looked up and around, then rubbed his chin, smirked, and left. I’m sorry he didn’t buy anything, but I was so relieved.” When I don’t respond, she pushes her glasses up on her freckled nose. “Hey, you okay?”

Shit.

Inhaling the fragrance of the flowers, I calm myself down. I maneuver around the arrangements and lock my purse in the locker behind the counter.

She places her scissors on the counter, gripping my hands in hers. She’s forgotten about the walk-in customer. It’s me that has her worried.

Crap.

“Yeah, I’m fine.” The lie flows easily past my lips. I broaden my fake smile and nod, my space buns bobbing on my head. “Life’s peachy.”

Opal frowns. I don’t think she buys it.

“Do I need to use these,”—she releases me, grabs the floral scissors again and clamps them twice in the air—“on a special someone that starts with a *C* and ends with *I broke into your apartment as foreplay*?”

The shock at hearing her joke freezes me for a moment. She doesn’t sound anxious at confronting Carter. Because of me.

It feels like she’s hugging my heart. And also, she’s hilarious. I had no idea Opal had it in her.

I choke on my spit for a moment before bursting into giggles.

She’s the only person in my life to know Carter and I are dating. Naturally, I shared some of his dirty-yet-safe-for-work texts with her. The only person other than Carter and Killian who cares enough to listen to me.

I’m curious as I study this hidden side of Opal. The introverted woman who came out of her shell to threaten Carter. For me.

Honestly, she's so cute. My giggle escalates into full-blown laughter the longer I think about it. My eyes tear up and I snatch my hands from hers to wipe at my cheeks.

"What?" Her smooth brow creases. "I know it's not your parents because you're never upset over anything those assholes do anymore. There's only one culprit left."

"It's a delicate situation," I explain.

"Meaning it'll be easier to handle." She raises the scissors. "Snip, snip, snip."

"Thanks, Opal." I lean in to hug her, not caring she suddenly stills instead of hugging me back. "I needed this."

"To have him castrated?"

"What? No." Her question snips something all right. Our hug. I pull back, my giggles waning. "No, no. No castrating. His dick is one of his best qualities."

Right after his affectionate, weird, and possessive heart. And how he comforted me this weird-ass morning.

"Gotcha, boss." She returns to shifting the flowers around. "If you ever change your mind…"

"I know where to find you."

I don't elaborate after that. She doesn't ask for more.

Talking about my disappointment and confusion isn't necessary. I laughed it out.

My flowers and Opal made it better.

Later that day, Carter makes everything perfect.

He shows up on time before I even have a chance to hang the *Closed* sign up and lock the shop for the weekend.

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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Amara

"Amara." Carter's gray gaze lingers on my cutoff jeans, moving higher up to my red and blue T-shirt. "You should change. Or at least wear a hoodie over your T-shirt. You'll catch a cold."

"Nope." I hop in place, my sneakers hitting the floor in my living room again and again and again. "I'm still hot from the shower. If I pull on one of my hoodies, I'll sweat."

Carter lets out a short laugh, tilts his head, and rubs his jaw slowly. Crazy seductive even when he just watches me.

"Maybe if you stopped jumping in place"—he doesn't move to stop me, only looks me over and smirks—"you wouldn't have to worry about sweating. You'll be cold outside. I'll spank you if you don't grab a sweater from one of these boxes."

He doesn't chide me for being all over the place. Doesn't remind me we're already done packing and should get going.

Love bleeds from his eyes. Love he won't admit to, not yet. But it's there. My family always gave me the stink eye for letting off steam by jumping or running around the house. Carter seems to like it.

By how hard he is, I'd say he's turned on by it.

"Can't." *Hop, hop, hop.* This time, I shake my arms before dropping them to my sides. "Too nervous. Too much energy. We're moving in together, muffin. I still can't believe it."

"Us, and…"

My whole body sobers in response.

“Oh.” I stop jumping, hugging my middle.

Doubts gnaw at my excitement. I have no idea what to expect of Killian. Normally, I wouldn’t care. I do now. I don’t want to disappoint them or be a burden.

If Killian turns away from me again, I’ll blame myself. I won’t be able to escape the feeling of being less than. Of being this annoying girl who gets in the way.

“Pet, what did I say about hugging yourself?” He stalks toward me, enveloping me into his warm body. His sandalwood cologne mixes with his delicious Carter scent, and I snuggle into his chest. “You don’t get to do that whenever I’m around. I hug you. Me.”

“You’re right.”

“Hey.” He draws back to lock my chin between his fingers, angling my head up. He still has one arm looped around me, locking me to him. “What happened yesterday, it was real.”

“What was?”

“You’re cute when you pretend to be shy, A.” His thumb tugs at my bottom lip. Playful. Teasing. Turning my inside into jelly. “The shadow. The grunt coming from the doorway. Don’t think I didn’t see you peeking beneath Killian’s tie.”

My eyes widen. My eyebrows shoot up. “You did?”

One blink. “Yes.”

A million questions race through my head. Since I have to start with one, I choose, “That’s why you two sat close to each other today?”

“Let’s make one thing clear.” Honesty and fierceness erupt from him like hot lava. “I wasn’t cheating on you. I never will.”

“I never suggested you did that.” I return him the same serious look. My eyes narrow, and I press my lips together. “When Killian and I were in the car, I felt something. But what you and I have is more precious to me than anything. I didn’t want to risk *us* by bringing this up too soon, so I decided to forget the whole thing. Then, in the conference room, you looked like you wanted him and I thought he’d cave. He didn’t. He was so mad, Carter. It’s fucking with my head.”

“Say what’s bothering you,” Carter commands, his grip brutal. “Explicitly.”

“I’m confused. He doesn’t want it. He does want it. I don’t know. Either way, we can’t force him.” The pained sigh clutching at my lungs gets

snuffed out by my love for Carter. By my need to explain this isn't about Killian. Not just Killian. "I love being yours. You're more than I could've ever dreamed of. No one gets me like you do. No one."

For long moments, Carter slides his teeth over his bottom lip. His gaze drills into my soul. Emotions flash across his expressive face.

Eventually, a smile breaks through. One that I see people around the hotel cowering from. One that makes my knees weak and wobbly.

"He does want…something. He's sorry, too. This afternoon, he asked if I heard from you. Even looked semi-apologetic." Carter leans in, inhaling my cheek, burying his fingers into my hair that I left loose after the shower. "It got me hard, pet. Knowing—fucking seeing—he likes you. Imagining all the ways he's going to defile your hot little body while I make him groan. We have so much to catch up on."

"Like sleeping together," I breathe. I hope. I wish so fucking hard on it. "Having breakfast together. Getting to know each other."

"That too." He nips at my cheek. "And fuck, now you're telling me you had that moment in the car, fuck. It's perfect. Everything's coming together."

His tongue darts out, hot and seductive as he licks me from the corner of my mouth to my ear. I whimper, my fingers digging into the fabric of his black shirt. Tugging him to me. I feel his mouth skating across my skin, his lips brushing on my swollen temple.

"You want the three of us to be together?" he asks before sliding his lips to my parted lips, swallowing my moans.

His hand slides to cup my jaw, tilting my head to give him a better angle. His cock strains between us, and I raise one foot off the ground, pinning it to the back of his strong thighs.

At my demanding touch, he wrenches himself from me. His eyes are a picture of madness. His lips swollen, his breaths laden and hot on my skin. "Do you?"

"It doesn't matter if he doesn't." I can't handle a repeat of today. I won't. "We won't make him."

"Oh, pet." Carter grabs my ass, hauling me to his cock. "We're not making him do anything. He'll come to us on his own. Yesterday, we doused the setting in gasoline. This afternoon, we flashed him the matches. Tonight, we'll light the motherfucking torch."

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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Amara

I don't say a word as I step inside the penthouse. Too nervous Killian might be around like last time.

Moreover since I'm by myself. Carter has been the perfect gentleman and is down the street, buying me a new body lotion. I forgot mine in a cabinet at my old apartment. I didn't ask for it. It was him. It's the one he loves sniffing on me and refuses to live without.

One step forward in the foyer. I can't see the kitchen, but my ears are working overtime.

I hear nothing.

It's not that late, but I hope he's off to bed.

Despite Carter's reassurances, today has left me raw. I'd much rather face Killian refreshed or at least with Carter by my side.

He should be here in a few minutes.

I'll be fine.

People don't die from sexual tension or rejection, do they?

After sending a small prayer to whoever's up there listening, I keep walking. My feet pad on the marble floors. One hesitant step after the other.

Stop. Listen.

More silence welcomes me. And warmth. Thank heavens for the warmth. As Carter predicted, I got cold once we unfolded ourselves from his Porsche and into the parking garage of their building.

He didn't pin me with an *I told you so*, though. Carter isn't petty, unlike *some* people are. Never him. What he did was shrug off his suit jacket and

drape it over my shoulders before promising to bring my two duffels later and leaving for the pharmacy.

I grip the edge of the wall where the foyer ends and the penthouse begins, angling my body. Peeking into the first floor.

No one's in the living room area. The kitchen's also empty.

I shake my head at myself. Even if Killian were here, all he'd do is run in the opposite direction.

A metaphorical punch in the gut still hurts.

Yeah, yeah, inner voice, whatever. I'm not in the mood.

Carter swore Killian doesn't hate me. That he doesn't mean to be an asshole. That he wants me. Us.

And I choose to believe him.

I have this.

Confidence injects into my veins, and I march forward and into the kitchen. The empty kitchen.

The relief I thought I'd have doesn't follow. Now that I see Killian's off somewhere doing something else, I can't help but feel a tiny bit disappointed.

Shake it off, Amara, you're just confused. You said so yourself.

What's meant to be will be. I slip out of Carter's jacket, inhaling his scent before placing it neatly on the kitchen island.

Next on my list is tea. My flayed nerves could really use some right about now. I waltz around the kitchen, fish out two mugs from the cupboard for Carter and me, and put the teapot on the stove.

The tea boxes, though. I always forget where they put them.

"Hmm." I rise on my tiptoes, opening one cupboard after the other. Oh, here it—

"Hello, Amara."

"Help!" I scream, snapping my eyes shut.

My heart races a mile a minute.

When it shouldn't.

Clarity chases away the panic when I realize the voice belongs to Killian. Fuck the guy who broke into my apartment. *Bastard*.

I hope Carter got him good. I hope there's a limb missing from the man who put me on edge like this.

"Am I so terrible that you need someone to save you?"

With a hand on my chest, I whip back to stare at Killian. "N-no, I—"

He’s standing on the landing of the second floor, a hand on the railing. Once my heart rate settles into something acceptable and not a borderline heart attack, I take the rest of him in.

His normally styled dirty blond hair is disheveled. Mussed. Sexy. Black cotton pants hang on his tapered hips.

He’s shirtless.

For the first time since I’ve started dating Carter, his stepdad greets me with nothing covering his upper body. No dress shirt. No Henley.

I repeat, *shirtless*.

Glorious.

Mouth-fucking-watering.

So wrong, Amara. Carter’s not here. Ogling Killian is the most wrong fucking thing.

Before I listen to logic and dart my gaze away, my curious, stupid eyes betray me. Forcing me to explore Killian’s tattoos.

He has two sleeves inked on each of his arms. Skulls and roses decorate his skin, each one blending into the other. Some of their mouths are clamped shut, the others are wide open in a scream. The roses don’t tone down the macabre design. They’re just as mean-looking as the skulls are with the thorns and the blood dripping from them.

His muscles pulse beneath the ink, bringing the roses and skulls to life. Transforming the flowers into something out of Poison Ivy’s Garden, not my shop. Especially with those veins threading through his forearms and biceps.

The sight is horrifically alluring.

It causes me to cement my feet to the floor. To keep from gliding to Killian. To keep from trailing my fingertips over each skull and rose. Exploring the feel of Killian’s veins and enjoying the blood thrumming through them.

It costs me, but I do it.

“You what, beautiful girl?” Killian’s at the bottom of the stairs, his dark gaze intense. Fixed on me.

Wetting my lips, I focus every bit of my attention on the floor. The marble veins are safe. Much safer than the sexy predicament I’m in.

“I’m sorry.” I twirl a lock of my hair around my finger. “Didn’t mean to intrude. Or scream.”

“You live here. You’re not intruding. And screams don’t deter me.” Killian’s feet—the only part of him I see now—pad toward me. “There’s something appealing about making another person scream, wouldn’t you agree, beautiful girl?”

His cologne assaults my senses. Then images of either Carter or me screaming because Killian fucked us too hard. Or worse.

Better stay quiet. For once in my life, I choose silence.

One hot finger presses my chin up. Killian’s eyes are different from Carter’s. Dark brown instead of gray. Far less unhinged and far more intense.

They’re just as predatory, though. Both of them see through me. Disarming me.

Reckless. Embarrassment. Silly little girl.

Those were a few of the choice words my parents and only sister had for me over the years. Until I left.

But Carter or Killian never say those things to me. They don’t even look at like I’m a freak or with their lips twisted into a snark no matter what I do.

The only thing they have for me is smiles. And now, now there’s nothing but desire on Killian’s expression.

“How’s your head?” he asks, his gaze drifting higher, then back at my eyes.

“Uh…” I rub the small lump that doesn’t hurt anymore. “It’s okay.”

“Amara.” His deep voice is an earthquake, and I shudder.

“Yes?” I whisper. Or more like breathe out. I feel floaty.

“Amara, listen to me.”

I do listen. It’s talking that I’m struggling with. My throat is clogged. My mouth is dry.

Being this close to him, without Carter here, it’s so fucking fucked.

“We should probably wait for Carter.” He releases my chin but doesn’t step back. “To have this talk. The three of us.”

When I stay silent, Killian’s attention deviates from my face. Lowers down my body. His nostrils flare when he reaches below my breastbone. My nipples are hard. My breasts are swollen.

They’re sending him a message.

The right one at the wrong time.

While my mouth doesn’t work, my feet do. I walk backward, my sneakers scuffling as I drag myself to safety.

Doesn’t help. Every step back is mirrored by a step forward from Killian.

No music plays in the background, but there’s no denying he and I are dancing. A predator and his prey.

Until my back hits one of the walls in the kitchen.

My skin tingles and my breaths quicken as I get lost in his shadow.

“Beautiful girl.” He slams a hand over my head, his voice gruff. “Eyes on me.”

He doesn’t touch me or try to coerce me into looking at him again. Doesn’t have to. His command is powerful enough. Violent. Consuming.

Throughout my entire life, I’ve met one person and one person alone who’s had this effect on me.

My pulse roars between my ears at the realization.

Carter.

“Where’s Carter?” Killian grits out, as if reading my mind.

“Went to pick up body lotion.” My nose twitches, the traitorous asshole. Does Killian know it means I’m nervous? “For me. Forgot it at home. He. Uh. Likes the smell. So he went to pick up a new one for me.”

“You shouldn’t be embarrassed. Forgetting things is only human.” Killian leans in closer, his eyes darkening. “You went through a lot the past two days. No one expects you to have your shit together.”

The muscles on Killian’s chest stretch as he expands his lungs with an inhale. His eyebrows lower. Lips pressed tight. Jaw ticking.

He isn’t being compassionate.

He’s tortured.

“Even a brave girl like you.” Killian’s low voice reaches to my pussy. “Even she…”

My breath hitches. I press my back further against the wall.

Killian being Killian ignores it. But unlike Killian, he opens his mouth and speaks.

“The *perfect* girl,” he adds, his words searing me, disintegrating me into nothing. “Even she’s entitled to have her off days. Forget things. Pretend she’s not seeing things.”

My ears blare as the organ in my chest screams.

Ba-boom. Ba-boom. Ba-boom. Run. Stay. Run. Stay.

“You think I’m perfect?” Out of everything, it’s the only question I can think of that won’t get me in trouble.

Thanking him would fuel his hunger further. Telling him *This perfect girl and her boyfriend are right here, waiting for you to join them* would mean nothing with Carter gone.

Oh, muffin, just buy whichever lotion and come back already. I'm losing it. Worse, I've been lost for ten minutes now.

"Yes." Killian bends to my eye level, our faces inches apart. "I thought you were perfect the moment Carter gave you a piggyback ride when you got here the first time."

I remember that day. Though not as fondly. Carter walked me in here, and we were laughing. He teased me about how I choked him. I teased back, reminding him I choked him harder when he went down on me a day before.

Then Killian emerged from the balcony, his face as serious as he's been for the six months that followed.

Staring into this grumpy man's face now, I'm starting to reevaluate *everything*.

"You're beautiful, but anyone could tell you that." Killian's heat has to be hotter than hell. "Only someone who really knows you can appreciate what you have on the inside. Your vibrant energy. Your adorable laugh. The way you love and talk about your plants and flowers as if they were your children. How you jump up and down when you're excited."

Trapped. I'm trapped. My mind is Killian's prisoner. My body is his.

He keeps talking.

He's saying something.

My scrambled eggs of a brain doesn't hear him. All I see are his lips moving.

"What did you say?" I can't miss what he said. It seems important. Way too important.

His lips twitch. Killian eviscerates that rare almost-smile of his. "The delicious sound of your moans."

Oh.

Blabber, Amara. Blabbering is safe. Blabber until Carter gets here.

"H-how do you know all that about me?"

"Just because we don't talk, doesn't mean I don't pay attention." Killian's eyes are blacker than black. "That I don't watch."

With those simple words, I understand what Carter's been trying to explain to me.

This complicated man has always had a thing for me. Like I'm sure he has a thing for Carter.

He's been keeping his distance for a reason. He's been masking his feelings for me since I'm Carter's, and Killian is as loyal as they come. He hasn't made a move on Carter. Hasn't been a predator or made it seem like he's been grooming him all this time.

It makes sense now.

Then yesterday happened.

The delicate balance the three of us have maintained is no more.

Carter issued him an open invitation, pushed Killian's buttons. Forced him to make a move.

"Carter's previous partners, I've never liked any of them. All it took was one look at them and"—he snaps his fingers—"I knew they weren't good enough for my stepson. Men or women. I haven't approved of any of them. You, though, stood out."

His tongue swipes across his bottom lip, wetting it.

"You, Amara, were—are—different. Special." His words cut into my fixation, demanding my attention. "For once, I didn't want to throw his partner out of here."

"Then?" What a fucking awful question to ask.

Okay would've been so much better. It wouldn't have egged him on. Wouldn't have encouraged him to continue this without Carter here.

One day my curiosity will be the end of me.

"It was jealousy." The fire blazing in him roars, scalds. Scorches the earth he's standing on. "I'm still not fucking over it. How he has you. How he touches you."

Shock renders my body frozen as he slams another hand on the wall, bracketing me. His hands slide down lower, his thumbs grazing my biceps.

"Kisses you."

My eyes widen, but I don't see anything around me. Nothing other than Killian Murdock. His ravenous gaze, the tic of his jaw, his strong nose. Every pore on his skin. His overpowering intensity.

"And the other way around. How you've been touching Carter. How he looks at you when he bends you over and fucks you on the kitchen island."

I knew it. Yesterday and today solidified months of this sweet notion I've been having. Those silent conversations they've been having. The idle, never-ending fire in the room whenever these two are there.

Words evade me. Killian stops talking, too. He's watching for my reaction. Seconds of laden silence pass between us when his gaze travels across me. It delves lower to my neck, my collarbone, landing on my nipple ring. He shakes his head, breathing hard.

Despite the turned-on, stupefied state I'm in, I don't forget what's right and what's wrong.

Carter's not here to hear Killian's confession. He deserves to be here for it.

Ignoring the heat in my core and the lust overtaking me, I talk. Because ruining this moment will save the three of us later.

"Uh, Killian, my eyes are up here." It's cheesy as fuck. Then again, I'm kind of short on brain cells at the moment.

"Beautiful girl." Killian's eyes are a wrecking ball, hitting my soul hard. Then his hand is on my throat. "I'm fully well aware of every inch of your body. Where every part of you is. Yours and Carter's. Have been for months."

Boom!

The sound of two duffel bags echoes in the vast space of the penthouse. Bags bearing my clothes and other shit I packed from home. A *thunk* that sounds awfully like a new body lotion that's still in the box, too.

"Pet," Carter says, his voice laced with the smile of his that I obsess over.

A smile I don't see since Killian looms even taller to hide me from him. By the fierceness of Killian's gaze, I'd go so far as to say he's protecting me.

Which is unnecessary. I'm not in danger from Carter.

He's not mad. I didn't hear an ounce of anger in his voice.

When Carter closes the distance between us, appearing at Killian's side, I have my proof as well.

At least I think I do.

"Carter, I—" Killian starts.

"Pet." Carter sidesteps Killian, snatching me and pinning me to his front. He walks me over to the kitchen island, pinning my back to it.

Killian's quick to follow. "She didn't do anything wrong."

Carter's gray eyes are playful. He doesn't smile, though. He doesn't smile at all when he says, "You've been a bad girl, pet. A very bad girl."

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CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Carter

Watching Killian hovering over my—our—girl is hot. More than that.

Motherfucking lava.

I hid in the shadows of the apartment, letting them bond. Giving him the space to open up to each other. Amara wasn't cheating on me. Killian didn't try to steal her from me.

He knows I want him. She knows we're going to get him tonight.

Only thing is, I had no idea watching them together would give me one of the hardest boners of my life.

Our roleplay yesterday didn't prepare me for this. For the full force of the desire for both of them barreling into my chest.

So, no, I'm not mad.

I am, however, playful.

"Couldn't wait for me, huh?" My fingers sink into her soft hair and tug. She whimpers. "Greedy, greedy Amara."

The sick part of me gets a kick out of fucking with their minds a little before I tell them I'm game.

I'm a sadistic fuck. This shouldn't be news to her.

Shouldn't be to Killian, either. Except it looks like it is, like in his need to defend her, he's forgotten all about it. He's so protective of her. I fucking love that.

"It's not like that." She doesn't cower from me. Her throat bobs with her gulp, but her voice doesn't waver. "I can explain."

What's the female equivalent to having balls? Having tits? A clit? Whatever it is, Amara has it.

"Carter, it's my fault. Don't blame Amara." Killian grabs my arm, forcing my attention to him. "I pounced on her. I'm sorry."

Being caught won't turn Killian into a pathetic crybaby. Despite the remorse painted on his face, he owns up to his so-called mistake.

"Not your fault." My eyes travel along his semi-naked body.

My stepdad's body. Broad chest, accentuated six-pack. The V-shaped muscle between his hip bones and the dark trail of hair leading below his cotton pants.

His hard cock.

I've seen the outline of his hard-on plenty of times in the past. When he was around me. Talking to me. Staring at me.

He's been attracted to me for years. And now I have my final proof that he's attracted to Amara.

"Carter, don't blame Amara." His jaw clenches, his voice determined. "She didn't do anything. I did. It's all on me."

"I'm sorry, Carter."

My attention snaps back to her. Such a beautiful, strong, woman.

I cock my head, sticking to my little game. "Your apologies are unnecessary."

Killian's fingers dig into my skin. "Carter…" he warns.

"You're breaking up with me?" Tears brim in Amara's big brown eyes.

Still, though, she plays it cool. No begging. No pointing fingers at Killian. She's regal even in her sadness.

No wonder I'm in love.

"Amara." I slide my hand to the side of her neck, gripping her.

"You're right," Amara rushes to add, breathing hard beneath my fingers. "I fucked up. I'll leave. I'll carry my bags downstairs and leave."

"No." Killian releases me, reaching for her wrist between us. The veins on his forearms bulge, his heat seeping into my body. "You're not going anywhere."

The way he's holding her hard like that has precum wetting the tip of my cock.

"And you." Killian's an inch from my face. His eyes are mad. Lust and protectiveness play in them. I want both. I want all of him. "You're not breaking up with her. I invaded her personal space. Me."

My tongue swipes along the top row of my teeth, and I smile.

First, I heard him confess he liked both Amara and me.

Now, they're protecting each other. Practically ganging up on me.

Last but not fucking least, we have to be honest with each other. The three of us.

I'm a firm believer in *do first, talk never*. Thing is, if the three of us don't fess up to our feelings right this minute, we'll end up worse than we had in the conference room.

We need to clear shit up.

"No one's breaking up with anyone." I stay in place, loosen my tie, and throw it to the floor. "Amara gets me, don't you?"

I catch the moment realization dawns behind her chocolate brown eyes. While Killian remains tense at her side, her teeth bite into her bottom lip. My gaze drops to her hard nipples and the outline of her piercing.

She arches her back, her full lips curving up. "I do."

"Carter, leave her the fuck alone." Killian puts himself between us, his hands on my pectorals, ready to push me. "She isn't one of your toys."

He's a wall of a man I'm dying to lick.

Whose nipples I dream of sucking.

For him, I'd get down on my goddamn knees.

Talk first, fuck later.

"She's into my games." My arm outstretches to Amara as an invitation, and she comes to my side. "Except tonight and every night after, we're done playing by ourselves. We're done being just the two of us."

I grip Amara's chin, tipping her head up. This close to her, I smell jasmine. Jasmine and Killian. Her swan-like neck smells of *him*.

I'm drawn to finding out what he would taste like on her. Fucking obsessed.

My lips part. My mouth and tongue trace the sweet taste of her cheeks, going lower, where Killian's smell is the most prominent.

The taste of him on her does exactly what I thought. It makes me wild. Makes me groan with pleasure. Amara moans when I bite her, her little fingers clinging to my dress shirt. One of my hands grabs Amara's waist, and the other delves into her hair.

Killian's silent. After getting my fill, I gaze up, watching his dark gaze eyeing us intently. Still in place. I need him. I feel Amara's energy coursing between us. She needs him just the same.

“We have one person in mind.” My fingers brush the underside of her swollen breasts.

She tries to wrench herself from my grasp. Amara and her kink of being my prey. It stirs the predator in me awake and my teeth clamp on her throat to keep her in place.

“No,” Amara cries out. She’s in pain. The good kind.

“Be a good girl and tell me you want me.”

“Always.”

The air Amara and I share stirs. Gets heavier.

Killian’s shadow blocks some of the light.

My cock jerks in my pants. My Prince Albert grazes my briefs. The mild pain heightens the insane arousal taking over me and I’m getting really fucking restless.

“Tell Killian you want him with us.” I pinch her pierced nipple, coaxing a delicious scream out of her. “Tell my stepdad you want him.”

She whimpers. Whispers something that sounds a lot like *mm-hmm*.

A rough hand rests on my nape. Long, big fingers slide around the side of my neck possessively and wrap around me.

I cast my eyes up to find Killian’s dark, hungry ones roaming over the two of us. Eating up Amara and me in turns.

“This little dream of yours from last night, pet.” I slide my hands to her hips, thrusting her body to mine. Bumping her belly to my erection. My cock jerks every fucking time. “You wanted it. Wanted us.”

“Yes, yes,” she cries out.

My fingers bite into her flesh. I’m dizzy with desire. Feeding off the depravity of the moment. Needing to bite. To fuck. To violate.

I’m starting to lose control.

As if hearing my thoughts, Killian digs his fingers deeper into my neck. The next moment, his other hand makes a fist in Amara’s long hair.

He’s touching us.

He’ll backtrack the moment he remembers the risk we’re taking by being together. How we’ll eventually have to go public with our relationship. Deal with rumors. Give assholes like Preston reason to doubt us, to undermine us.

They’ll paint him as a sick fuck. Make me look like a pathetic brainwashed groomed kid. They’ll say Amara is twisted for getting into this mess. Our mess.

I'll burn the goddamn city down if anyone says that about them. Use my bare hands to rip throats. Maim people.

Once I find it in me to tell Amara the truth about what we do for a living. Once I force her to stay and be able to have security detail on her twenty-four/seven.

I will.

But Killian's always been the responsible one. He won't want any of this for us.

Well, fuck that.

I see him. See his restraint hanging on by a thread.

I'm here to slice this thread right down the fucking middle.

"You were fucking desperate for both our cocks, A." Without pulling back, I fish out my knife. "Begging us to stretch you."

Amara gasps. Killian sticks to his silence. It doesn't bother me. I have his attention.

"Fill your tight holes." I hold her very still, getting off on their heated stares as I yank on her T-shirt collar. I cut the thin fabric down the middle, exposing her tits to us. "Or maybe you want to see if we can make both cocks fit into your pussy."

Her choked scream and Killian's groan do things to me. Dirty things. My forehead presses to hers, one hand cupping one of her swollen breasts. I squeeze her for all I'm worth, eager to see her flesh bruised, marked.

This one's mine. The second I'm leaving for Killian.

One of Amara's hands is in my hair. Clutching at it, tearing at the roots. Her other hand has found its way to Killian behind her. Her fingertips rest on the pulsing vein in his throat.

Connecting the three of us together.

It's her. This whole thing is possible, thanks to her. My filthy angel.

Who's going to get a whole lot filthier by the end of the night.

"That's not all, is it?" Her tits are no longer just mine. I shove her T-shirt to either side, giving Killian a view of our beautiful woman.

Her barbell ring drives him mad. I can tell by the low growl reverberating in his chest.

Moving my hands back to her hips, I pin her pussy to my cock. Forcing her to arch her back so I can lap my tongue on her nipple.

Her head falls and rests on Killian's shoulder.

He releases her hair, his large hand covering Amara's flushed cheek.

“You wanted it to be messy. Limbs and sweat and cum.”

She pulls me closer, and I groan against her taut nipple.

“That’s what you were begging for, wasn’t it?”

“More.” Amara tilts her head to the side, her lips latching on Killian’s skin. Sucking him into her mouth.

Killian’s eyes slam shut for a moment. When he opens them, he looks at the famished woman. He gains confidence, his hand slipping to her throat, locking her in place. His other one joins hers at my hair, exploring me.

Jesus fuck.

I can’t stop now.

“More, baby?” I say to her and him alike. “You’ll have more. You’ll watch our cocks rubbing together. We’ll grind against each other, kneeling on either side of you. Take turns pinching your nipples. Reaching back to touch your clit just the way you like it.”

“Yes.”

“Carter.”

Fucking finally.

“We’ll come at the same time,” I continue edging him. Edging them. “Have our seed on every inch of your beautiful face.”

Amara’s thighs clench. Her heart pounds in her chest. She’s begging for both Killian and me. I see him choking her, his thumb stroking her jaw.

I want to tell him he can go harder. That Amara is a kinky little thing. That she takes everything like a good girl.

I don’t need to, though. Soon, he’ll see everything for himself.

“We’ll take care of you, Amara,” I murmur, brushing my lips on her abused nipple. I move to the center, licking between her breasts. “We’ll make you come until you cry. Fuck each other and fuck you until you can’t take it. Our little cum slut. Ours.”

The ominous growl from Killian is a nitro boost to my dark desires.

“I’ll share you.” Sliding to bite and suck on her other nipple—Killian could have both of them later—while I grind into her stomach, I groan, “You’ll share me, A. And we’ll both share Killian.”

“Yes to everything,” she cries out the same moment her voice becomes strained. Killian’s choking her harder.

Fuck. Yes.

“Like he’ll share us.” I get ravenous seeing Killian’s heaving chest. “We’ll be one big fucked up family. Say yes.”

“Carter,” he repeats my name. His fingers clench in my hair.

“I’ll suck him off,” I keep teasing him. “Have him hard and ready to fuck you, pet.”

“Carter!” Amara screams, lifting a leg to hook around me, pulling me closer.

Killian doesn’t move. My dirty talk has only gotten the three of us to this stagnant point.

There’s no way we’re putting on a show for him. He needs to be a part of it.

Not for me or her alone.

For the three of us.

I untangle myself from her, tear at the button of her cutoffs, and shove them down her legs. Three fingers sink into her wet pussy, pleasuring her. Inviting Killian.

“You’re so fucking tight. Soaked and fucking perfect,” are my last words with my fingers in her cunt.

A second later, she’s being torn from my grip. Flipped to face Killian.

Her face is in his strong grip hands.

Finally, he crushes his lips to hers.

Here we fucking go.

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CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Amara

Killian's hands. Killian's lips. Killian's tongue.

My body still shudders from the aftershocks of Carter's fingers deep in my pussy. From his teeth on my nipple ring.

My tongue still tastes of Carter's minty breath.

My neck still stings from his bite.

My body burns because it's him looking at me.

Yet he's not the one whose fingers rake through my hair.

It's Killian's.

He possesses me. Owns me. Takes over my body.

As something inside me breaks, I start fearing he might be taking more.

"Isn't she a good girl?" Carter's voice carries to my ears.

He tears me away from my wicked thoughts. Reminds me my lips might be ravaged by Killian, but I'm also his. Carter's.

That's what I've been asking for. Dreaming of. To belong to these two men. To have them love and need one other, same as I need them. I've been worried about what'll happen if I like one of them more.

But here, the way we are, a sense of certainty envelops me. I won't choose. Won't need to.

I might not know Killian very well. What I have for him is more of an attraction than actual feelings. Yet I can tell what I feel will evolve. One day, I'll grow to love him and Carter equally.

Everything's going to work itself out.

Butterflies explode in my belly. Or bees. Definitely bees, swarming into the flowers that are my blossoming insides.

“So good.” Killian breaks our kiss. His eyes are hooded. His lips swollen. For the first time since I’ve met him, I catch a glimpse of his inner madness and it’s a beautiful thing. “Tastes like candy. And trouble. Are you trouble, beautiful girl?”

“What do you think?” Carter rips off what’s left of my T-shirt over my shoulders.

His lips coast along my naked shoulder. He doesn’t reach forward to touch Killian, though I’m aware of how much he needs it.

“The worst kind.” Killian Murdock, Carter’s stepdad, breaks our heated gaze. He looks over my shoulder at Carter, a small, sinister smirk playing on his lips. “Reminds me of a certain someone.”

I feel Carter’s smile on my skin. Then Killian’s back to assaulting my mouth. His groans and grasp on my scalp reflect his overwhelming need.

He rubs his tongue against mine skillfully, dipping deeper. Attacking me. Exploring me. He’s meticulous, searching, giving me as much pleasure as he’s taking.

He acquaints himself with me through his lips.

I lose myself in him. Until he bites me. His teeth sink into my bottom lip like he fucking means to hurt me. I yelp in pain and pleasure, lashing at him, gripping his cheeks. His scruff. Feeling his high cheekbones beneath my fingertips.

I could draw blood. I—

Big hands grab my biceps from behind.

“Easy there, pet,” Carter growls in my ear. While my lips move to Killian’s sensual one.

Fucking surreal.

“You’re going to take what we give you,” Carter hisses, tucking my hair to the side and I offer him my neck. He runs his lips along my delicate curve, his nose nearly touching Killian’s hand. “Be a good girl and you’ll get everything. Every orgasm you can handle. And all those you absolutely can’t.”

Carter sucks on my exposed skin hard. His fingers bite mercilessly into my arms. Killian becomes just as aggressive, sucking on my bottom lip, his fingertips bruising my scalp.

It’s as if these two are on their metaphorical knees for me. Worshipping me. With their kisses, nipping and sucking, their lips tell me they adore me.

Their ruthless fingers promise I belong to them and no one else.

Their hard cocks are proof of how much they want me.

Me and each other. *Us*.

One of Killian’s hands releases my face. My eyes flutter open to see where he’s placing it.

I’m a sucker for his attention. I’m equally needy and desperate for Killian to touch Carter. He had his hand on him before, but it wasn’t enough. I won’t be satisfied until I’m sure Killian’s heart is truly in it.

His palm finds Carter’s hair, his fingers drowning into the side of his head and shoving him harder to my neck.

Carter’s moan reverberates through me. He sucks on my flesh as if he tries to rip my throat out. As if he’s after drawing blood. Killian doesn’t let up either, his teeth sinking into the flesh of my lip, tugging and sucking. He only stops to lave his tongue on the wounded flesh every now and again, and even that doesn’t feel like a gentle touch.

Heat pools between my thighs. I’m pressed between them, wound so tight I might burst. I don’t find it in me to regret the insanity swirling inside me.

Their intensity and the stinging, pleasurable pain make me dizzy. Floaty. Wobbly.

My knees buckle. I almost fall, before the two of them catch me. Killian’s strong hands move to my ribs, an inch over where Carter fastens his grip on my hips, yanking my back to his front. Violently so.

“You taste delicious.” Killian’s mouth traces hot kisses to the side of my neck Carter doesn’t occupy. He lingers on my shoulder, his nose nuzzling my skin. “Fucking perfect.”

“See, pet?” Carter’s breaths are labored as he nips at my ear. “I told you he likes you.”

The hunger inside me demands they touch me. That they lose their clothes and fuck me already.

My heart isn’t as selfish. I wait, watching the men raising their heads slowly. My heart and pussy flutter when Carter and Killian’s eyes clash with one another.

They’re having one of their silent conversations. I’ve never minded it one bit, and today, I mind it even less. Their secrets are finally out in the open.

They’re not just theirs, anymore, they’re also mine now. I can see through these two beautiful people.

They’re mine now. We’re connected. Entwined.

Meant to be.

What I don’t hear, their bodies will reveal soon enough.

“Come here,” Killian groans, thrusting me to him. Pinning me to his hot chest. His hard dick. Talking to both Carter and me.

We obey. Carter moves toward Killian with me. His hands skate on top of Killian’s, and together, they slide their hands down to my hips.

“Fuck, Amara, you make my dick so hard.” Carter slides his hard length up and down my crack.

“So hard,” Killian groans in agreement, bending to suck my pierced nipple. He wraps his fingers around my wrist, bringing them to his throbbing erection.

Shivers take over my body. My pussy clenches, evoking a starved growl out of Carter.

“Jerk me off, Amara,” Killian demands, his teeth nipping at my sore nipple. “Make it hurt, beautiful girl.”

I do, or at least I try. It’s difficult when Carter slams my ass from behind, stealing his pleasure from me. I feel him through his pants, feel as if his dick is about to tear through them.

“Christ,” Killian hisses when I roll my hand up and down his length. He pulsates in my palm, but I don’t want him to come like this.

There’s more to this. So much more.

My hand skates up Killian’s body, delving into his short, dirty blond hair. My other one reaches back to Carter’s ass. Fuck, I could hold on to that toned ass for days.

Killian’s not mad that I took the initiative. He and Carter both reward me with satisfied growls and grunts. They dig their fingers deeper into my flesh. Their teeth, mouths, and touches are an assault on my senses.

I’m empty, and yet I’m so close to coming.

When I dreamed about the two of them, I was much more eloquent. I ordered them around. I encouraged them to touch each other. Told them how turned on I was from being theirs.

But this isn’t a dream.

“Please, please, please.”

As if they’ve been practicing it, both of them slow down.

“Please, what?” Carter whispers. “What does your dirty little mind want, A?”

His encouraging words do little to help my short-circuited brain. The answer is everything.

I want them naked. Want the three of us on the floor, wild and raw.

Want them to never stop.

Carter’s cheek rests on mine, and the both of us are looking up at Killian.

And then Carter does something that floors me. My relentless king, my alpha, truly shares me. He’s quiet, allowing Killian to do anything and everything to me.

Killian takes it. Oh, fuck, does he take it. He winds his hand in my hair, giving it a rough tug. “Use your words.”

“You.” I twist my head to the side so Carter will know I’m talking to him too. “Inside me.”

This gives Killian a pause. The muscles on his strong shoulders strain. It’s as if he isn’t breathing.

What’s worse, his grip on my hair loosens.

He’s regretting it.

Carter doesn’t wait for his response. Doesn’t let him walk away.

He drops to his knees behind me, and both Killian and I turn to look at him. I respond to Carter, lifting one foot and then the other as he relieves me of my jean shorts.

“No panties.” He glances at me from his place on the floor. His smirk strikes me right through the heart. “Dirty girl.”

“I thought you noticed before.” I taunt him with a smirk of my own as he straightens up.

“Was kinda busy.” He rises back, biting my throat.

At our playful banter, Killian’s hesitation disappears. His hands are on me again. He grabs one of my tits, using his free hand to hurt me, flicking his forefinger on my pierced nipple.

I scream, and Carter seizes the opportunity to stuff two fingers into my open mouth. My lips close on them, and my eyes roll at the comfort of having him there.

“That’s it.” He shoves them deeper, making me gag. Making me drool. “Suck on my fingers. Just like that. Such a good girl.”

Even when he comes from behind me, Carter’s not gentle. His fingers hit the back of my throat. His cock jerks against my ass when I cough.

“What we’re going to do to you will hurt a lot worse than this.” Killian’s brown eyes bore into mine. “Better get used to the pain, beautiful girl. Take his fingers all the fucking way.”

They have plans for me. And hopefully for each other. If not, I’ll make them.

Images of Killian shoving himself inside Carter flicker in my mind. They’ll be so beautiful together. I can’t fucking wait.

“More spit.” Carter draws his fingers back just a little, tapping them on my tongue. “You’ll have four fingers pushed inside your pretty pussy. Two from the back, two from the front. You’ll need to be lubed.”

Together. Inside me. Touching each other as well as me.

Killian arches an eyebrow. Challenging me to tell them to stop. Testing me.

Carter’s fingers fill my mouth, while Killian pulls on my hair again. It’s hard to concentrate, let alone spit.

But I’m more than their toy. I’m a bad bitch, and I do it anyway.

My saliva coats Carter’s fingers. There’s so much of it, it’s dripping past the corners of my lips.

“Fuck, that’s hot,” Carter growls.

“Good girl.” Killian steps closer, letting go of my hair to encapsulate my cheek in his palm.

With Carter’s fingers still lodged down my throat, Killian adds two of his. Stretching my lips. Showing me what they’re about to do to my pussy.

Killian looms over me. “*Our* good girl.”

His and Carter’s faces are inches apart. Their lips are so close.

If they would only lean into each other… If they would intertwine their fingers in my pussy while their tongues rubbed against each other.

Do it, I scream inwardly.

“She is. Now, open up for us, pet.” Carter kicks my legs to the sides.

Both of them relieve my lips of the erotic invasion. My mouth feels empty.

“You asked us to be inside you.” Carter runs his teeth along the curve of my neck. “You’ve been so good. You’ve earned it.”

What was supposed to be reassuring bothers me. I don’t want this to be just about me. A second ago, I wanted him to reach over for Killian. I wanted them to kiss. For the three of us to really be together.

A pout threatens to curve my lips down. There and gone.

Because my disappointment is short-lived. Carter wraps his arm around my waist, parting my pussy lips.

“You go first,” he murmurs, his hoarse voice seductive.

Carter’s cheek presses to mine, so I know he’s talking to Killian.

Killian gazes at the both of us like we’re a meal and he’s been starved for years.

His teeth dig into his bottom lip again. His chest expands. But thank fuck, he’s no longer having second thoughts. He places two fingers beneath my mouth. “Spit.”

Eagerly, I do.

Then he’s sliding his fingers along the side of my breasts. Down my belly. He positions his wet fingers where I need both him and Carter the most.

The anticipation is killing me. A scream lodges in my throat. I need them. I need them so bad.

“You sure about that, Amara?” Killian asks.

“Begonias,” I huff. Full sentences are too fucking taxing now.

His eyebrows knit.

“Her safeword.” Carter’s lips curve against the damp skin of my neck. “She means she remembers it and will use it. You know, in case it gets to be too much. She’s sure she wants us finger-fucking her cunt.”

“Begonias,” Killian repeats, pressing his fingers flat on my entrance. “A beautiful flower.”

I’m lost in his eyes. In the seductive way he swipes them across my naked body.

I know he’s hard. I know his pants are soaked with my arousal. I’m aching to see, not just know. But I can’t seem to be able to let go of his eyes.

He applies more pressure on my pussy. Massages my spit on my lips. On my clit. “Not as beautiful as you, though.”

“No.” I hear Carter’s husky voice over my head. “There’s nothing as beautiful as Amara.”

“There’s one person that matches her beauty,” Killian whispers.

He doesn’t elaborate. He buries his fingers in my pussy. I cry out, my head dropping on Carter’s shoulder. They’ve been teasing me for so long. I’m finally filled. At fucking last.

My body thrums with an all-consuming, overpowering lust. My pussy clenches around Killian who curses in response. My mouth gapes, my eyes taking the two dark, depraved men towering over me.

“Fuck, yes.” Carter leans over me, looking at his stepdad pumping me. “How does it feel, Killian?”

“Shove yours in. You’ll see.” It doesn’t sound like Killian’s teasing Carter. He orders him. His fathomless gaze finds me, fire burning from deep within. “Grab my cock, Amara.”

Carter and I comply immediately. We have no other choice.

We don’t want one, either.

“Fuck!” I scream when Carter stretches me further.

My juices and spit help, but their fingers are big. Really big. I wriggle in their arms and squeeze Killian too hard.

They don’t stop, though.

They look down at me. Killian’s thumb massages my clit. Carter presses his to the tight ring of muscles.

The stinging sensation fades. Even when they thrust their fingers harder, it doesn’t hurt.

“Baby.” Carter’s gray gaze locks on mine. “Your hand looks so freaking hot around his cock. I bet your mouth would too. Those pretty pink lips sucking him off… Fuck.”

Pleasure consumes me, making it hard to breathe. Briefly, I wonder how the hell it is that I don’t faint.

“Jerk me off, Amara,” Killian repeats his command. He grabs my neck, his lips grazing my ear. “Make it feel good. Don’t fucking stop unless I tell you to.”

I move my hand along his long, thick cock, pumping him. The two men finger-fuck me while Killian’s precum wets my thumb and his cock throbs in my hand. I’m delirious. In lust. In fucking delirium.

They kiss and bite me. Loom over me to watch their wet fingers pumping in and out of me.

But their mouths are still nowhere near each other’s.

In my floaty state, my tongue is heavy in my mouth. There’s no use in trying to complete a whole sentence.

“Carter.”

“Kinky little thing.” Carter’s eyes are as dark as Killian’s. “What is it? Want another finger in your dripping pussy? To have six fingers inside

you?”

“No.” I shake my head, my response more of a breath than a word.

It pains me to release Killian. I have to. Have to get my message across.

“What, then?” Killian cocks his head to the side.

I snake both my hands up. One around Killian’s nape. The other is around my Carter’s.

While they fill me from the inside, massaging my walls, my G-spot, and every part of my pussy, all I can think of is this one thing.

All I have to say is this one word.

“Kiss.”

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CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Killian

"Kiss."

Amara makes it sound so simple. So logical.

So. Fucking. Natural.

As if the idea of me and my fucking *stepson* kissing isn't taboo.

As if what we're doing at the moment isn't wrong enough all on its own. I'm losing the battle against what I know is right, don't have any remorse for any of it, and it's okay with her.

More than okay. She encourages it.

Amara moans as we're playing with each other's fingers. My stepson and I both finger fucking his girlfriend's pussy.

And damn it. I don't hate any of it. I want more.

I'm hard. Starved to have them both. And here they are, right here. Waiting for me.

Hungry to have me.

Amara's breaths fan on my exposed, sensitive skin.

Carter's lips are parted, his gray eyes glinting with mischief.

This is the kid who I taught how to read. How to drive. How to beat someone up and when it's better to let them go.

I. Raised. Him.

Except he doesn't need me to be a father figure for him anymore.

He's not a kid. Hasn't been for a while now.

It doesn't make it any less wrong.

"We shouldn't," I mutter. There's not a sliver of conviction in my voice.

I’m losing this war between what’s right and what’s wrong. What would land me a special place in hell. Amara’s fingers caressing and grazing my neck don’t make me feel any better about this.

Another second and I’ll cave. I’ll crash and burn. The three of us will.

My inner turmoil doesn’t go unnoticed by Carter. He flexes his fingers inside the tight space of Amara’s cunt. Engulfing mine with them, squeezing my fingers between his.

He leans forward. Offers himself. A bolt of lightning strikes inside his gray eyes. My unhinged stepson. My business partner. The man I lust over. And more. So much more.

“Please.” Amara’s fingertips whisper over my skin, her brown eyes pleading.

Her voice is so sweet. So decadent. Hearing her beg breaks through my restraint. From her lips, the idea of kissing Carter doesn’t sound as bad. Every reason we shouldn’t be together is being stripped away. All of them. One by fucking one.

There’s nothing wrong with us.

There’s just love.

Pure, intoxicating, mad, and accepting love.

Amara screams this truth without uttering a single word. Tells me it’s okay to be whoever the fuck I am. To take what I want and forget everything and everyone else.

I knew this had to have been the reason Carter runs off to spend time with her whenever he could. Yes, he’s been staying with me longer. He’s done that every time I’ve asked him to. He was happy to be needed. To be by my side.

He’s also been torn and guilty as fuck about making Amara wait.

After being hit with the full force of her, I understand why.

“Killian.” Amara’s fingers dip beneath my chin, tilting my head up to Carter.

She doesn’t force me. She’s offering him. Easing my doubts.

It takes me a moment. Eventually, I let my gaze travel to Carter’s.

Our eyes meet, and it’s nothing like when Amara and mine had. Both of us are strong. Both are dominant. Our stares clash, his fire consuming mine while mine slams into him. My desire is mirrored in his gaze. The air between us thickens.

His fingers grip mine tighter inside Amara's pussy. His molars grind. Carter's not a patient man. I can tell he's calling on every ounce of self-restraint to keep from grabbing my face and kissing me.

He needs me to show him I'm in.

"Yeah. Please, Killian." Carter presses closer, his chin grazing the top of Amara's head.

His movement pushes Amara forward and into me. Her breasts collide with my chest. The tip of my dick brushes her soft belly.

Carter's lips are precariously close to mine.

"This isn't right," I grunt out.

It's not an *I don't want this*, and both of them hear it.

Amara tempts me by swaying back and forth in the tight space we offer her. Grinds on our fingers. Her moans are hot against my chest. Her lips are flower petals on my skin, and her taut nipples are so fucking sexy.

Carter continues stroking my fingers inside her. Eyeing me.

"It's right," Carter demands.

"So right," Amara chimes in.

I'm so hard for them. The two of them. Precum leaks from the tip of my cock on Amara's skin. My breaths and Carter's mix, entangle. The three of us are toxic together. Our obsession is the worst kind of drug that ruins people.

"I fucking want this, Killian." Carter's eyes narrow. They lack his usual intensity. He's asking. Pleading. Groaning with frustration. "Fucking kiss me already."

Those four words kill my sense of right and wrong. They demolish the outside world. Erase the memories I have of him as a kid. Bring to light those of the man he's become.

The three of us are the only thing that matters now. The only people existing.

This chaotic girl and my unhinged stepson.

No more second thoughts.

"Come here." My desire wins over.

I grip the back of his neck. My fingers brush Amara's where she's touching him.

She breathes, "Yes."

I feel her eyes on us. Her pussy clenching on our fingers as I drag Carter to me.

His eyes are hooded. His jaw slacks, giving me a view of his pink tongue.

I tilt my head for a better angle, holding my breath.

There's no going back to what we were after this, I say inwardly during the longest second of my life.

My gaze flickers to his, and all I can think of is…

Mine.

Fuck going back.

Three years of barely restrained lust and feelings explode in this one single moment. I don't hold back when I lean forward.

I take.

Our lips crush together. Mesh against each other. Fire and ice colliding. A nuclear bomb detonating in our penthouse.

He groans, his lips moving on mine. Pushing against me. Demanding—no, *needing* more.

Fuck. Whatever he's feeling, I feel tenfold.

My hunger becomes an unrestrained beast. Out of control. Goddamn ravenous. I growl, kissing him harder, forcing him to part his lips for me. I take more of him, darting my tongue past his teeth. Kissing him with everything I have in me.

I'm raw, open, and vulnerable. Because this is the moment to do it. This is the exact right time to give this man every ounce of the pent-up desires I've been choking on for years.

Years of denying myself of him. Of stalking his every move around the penthouse. At work.

Three years of cursing myself for letting my gaze stray to his cock. His chest. His lips.

All of that blows up in my face.

My teeth dig into his lip. My tongue lashes at his. My fingers rake through his short hair.

More. More. More.

I'm losing myself to Amara that's moaning and is so perfect between us.

To him.

As does he. He opens his mouth wider, angling his head forward, offering me to delve deeper. Like he can't get enough of my lips. Of the kiss.

I can't get enough of him either. I don't think I ever could.

"Killian," Carter moans my name.

With this one word, he makes me bite and abuse his mouth. Punish him for the temptation. For the time I missed out on.

But I know that's not the whole truth. This, just the two of us, it wouldn't have been right. Wouldn't have been complete without *her*.

Without Amara.

She needed to be here. Now, she finally is.

"You're so fucking hot." She leans into me, biting my tattooed bicep.

I want more of her. More of them. So I use my thumb to stroke her clit. It's a tight fit since we're all mashed together, but her clit is swollen and she's wet. So wet that my thumb slides over and massages her for being such a good girl.

Her hands fall from our necks as her desire takes over. She's helpless, crushed by two ravenous kissing men. And she's about to come.

"Please," she begs, then sucks on my skin. Beautiful, needy thing.

"Her asshole," I order Carter between hungry kisses. "If your thumb isn't in there already, push it inside her tight little hole."

Carter's eyes fly open. His swollen lips hike up.

I don't see the moment he slips his thumb in or deeper into her other hole. Don't have to. Amara's body tells me everything my eyes can't see.

She shudders, her small fingers latching on to my waist. Her teeth release their death grip on my arm when she first screams, then begs for more.

She won't last long.

"Put your mouth on her." My gaze bores into his. "She's not coming by herself."

He understands. He wants that for her, same as I do. We return our mouths to Amara, our lips kissing, sucking, pleasuring her skin. Carter and I pour our attention on her neck, jaw, her cheeks.

Her hooded gaze glides from him to me. Her pussy clenches on us.

"I'm going to… Fuck." Her sweet voice strokes our ears and we shove our fingers deeper into her. "I'm going to come."

"Do it," we both snarl at the same time.

Our good girl does. She freezes for a moment. Her muscles strain. Her breath is caught in her throat. When she screams her release, her whole body shivers in our hold.

The penthouse is soundproofed, but for once, I hate it. For once, I wish it weren't. I wish everyone within a ten-mile radius could get a taste of the pleasure we brought Amara.

Us. Both of us.

We keep finger-fucking her holes, kissing her, telling her, “That’s it, let it go.”

Once her quivering body grows limp, I pull out of her. My hands go to her shoulders, and I take half a step back so I can look at her. Flushed cheeks and swollen lips. Eyes at half-mast as Carter continues to devour her shoulder with his mouth.

“You were so good,” I tell her, gazing at Carter so he’d know I’m talking to him too. “We’re not done. Are we, Carter?”

“No.” He shakes his head slowly, his psycho grin parting his lips. He’s beautiful in a dark way. Mine to do with as I wish. *Ours*. “How do you want us, Killian?”

“You.” I dive my hand into Amara’s long hair, shoving her to the floor. “On your knees.”

“No.” She wriggles, her eyes no longer hooded.

They’re very much alive. Rebellious.

Regardless of her playfulness, her denial stops me in my tracks. Carter’s wicked grin widens, reminding me this isn’t her safeword. Just in case, I raise an eyebrow, waiting for her.

“Not *begonias*,” she whispers. Then returns to fight me.

Little bird, pretending she wants to spread her wings and fly.

She doesn’t.

She won’t.

“Feral little thing.” I invade her space, casting my shadow over her. “You’ll go down on your knees. It’s either that, or I’m going to fuck your ass dry.”

Obviously, I’m not going to do it. Nor will I make it bleed.

But it’s clear she gets off on the fear.

“Kneel.” My second shove is far less gentle.

Her knees hit the floor, eyeing me with a newfound hunger.

“You.” I jerk my chin at Carter who has his hand patting Amara’s head like she really is his pet. His cock is hard in slacks. Thick and mouthwatering. “Clothes off. Lie on your back on the rug over there.”

“Yes, sir.”

He hasn’t called me that since he went into high school. It seems damn fitting now. As strong and as in control as he is, he’ll do as I say.

While he walks over a couple of steps to the rug, he unbuttons his shirt slowly. He slides it off his shoulders, exposing the smooth, taut skin on his back.

“Crawl over there, next to him,” I order her.

She does, swaying her beautiful, round ass. I kick off my pants and briefs, walking over to them. Waiting for her to come next to him. To have her where I want her.

“Stop.” I take my place in front of her. My hand curls around Amara’s nape, fingers clenching on her.

She bats her eyelashes, her hands curling into fists behind her back. Done fighting. “Tell me what to do.”

“Wrap your lips around my cock, beautiful girl.” My cock jerks in her face. “Fucking suck me.”

She bats her long eyelashes and then tries to turn her head to Carter.

“No, no, no.” I drag her face closer to my crotch as I glimpse at Carter. He’s looking at us, his bare chest on display, his hands working on removing his belt and pants. “I said suck me and I meant it.”

“Suck him, pet, or else…” Carter pulls his lips in, squeezing her shoulder before going back to undress himself.

Amara places her hands on my hips, baring her teeth at me. Sweet and beautiful, in all her unhinged glory.

“You have until Carter’s naked, Amara.” I watch him lower his zipper, as he kicks off his shoes and socks. “Your time’s running out. I promise you, I won’t hesitate to tear into your sweet little asshole. I’d much rather you make lube for it, though. But it’s up to you.”

My eyes roam over her. For a moment, my heart rages at the lump on her temple. I caress the red reddened skin.

That’s where my compassion ends. I fucking need her and Carter.

I grip her by the throat, shoving her lips to my groin. “Suck. It.”

She parts her lips slightly. Not enough. I piston my hips forward, lodging myself deep in her throat. Her choking noises are followed by her spit covering my dick. Dripping down her cheeks, over my balls.

“That’s it.” I fuck her face while forcing her head to stay still. “Take it. Every inch, Amara. Every fucking inch.”

She’s so beautiful. Lips wrapped around my length, her mouth struggling to adjust to my girth. My balls tighten, imagining both Carter’s and my

cocks in her together. I groan, my hooded gaze trailing between him and her.

“You can do better than that, pet.” Carter rids himself of his pants. “Suck. Fucking. Harder.”

I can be in her mouth for a year and her spit alone still won’t be enough. She needs more lubing before I go in her ass.

She doesn’t fight me when I rip her head off me.

“Keep your mouth open.” Amara’s mouth remains in an O shape, and I turn to Carter. “Help her.”

“Pretty, dirty pet,” he coos before gathering saliva in his mouth.

His cock is hard in his hand, his piercing wet with precum. He bends to Amara. Not too low, though. He’s giving me a view of both of them. His eyes flit to mine and back to Amara.

He spits into her mouth. Then bites her nose.

Weirdest shit I’ve ever seen. Hottest, too.

“Get Killian nice and wet.” He strokes her blown cheek with his knuckles. His gaze lands on my throbbing cock while he strokes Amara’s face. “That big, gorgeous dick you’re gonna take up your ass needs a lot of lubing.”

The hunger bleeding from him when he looks at my dick like that is too much. I’m so desperate to take, to conquer, that I force myself into Amara’s mouth without a warning.

“Motherfucker,” I curse. Her hot mouth is wet with her saliva. With his too.

Carter rubs himself as he watches.

“Enough.” I’m about to come, yanking her off me again. “Go ride Carter’s cock, beautiful girl. Ride him and get your ass up and ready for me.”

“Fuck, yes.” Carter walks backward, smirking.

Amara spins toward him, dragging her hands and knees on the rug. I follow her until she’s on top of Carter. Until she grips his cock and positions the crown between her pussy lips.

Their interaction is so natural, so fluid. Like that of a couple.

I’m almost jealous. Except I’m not an outsider anymore.

“Like this?” she asks me, reminding me I’m a part of this. Of them.

I stop to study them.

Amara bats her long dark eyelashes at me.

Carter glances at me, his hands going to Amara’s hips.

They’re real.

This is real.

“Just like that.”

I lower to my knees behind them, gripping her ass, my thumbs stroking her sweet flesh. She’s hot and shivering beneath my fingers. She’ll have a lot more to fear soon.

“Take his dick, Amara.” With a hand on her lower back, I push her down.

Carter’s cock disappears in her pussy. They both groan and her forehead falls on Carter’s shoulders.

Long, blonde locks drape around her face and she shakes harder, her thighs clenching and unclenching. Carter rakes his fingers through her hair, spreading his attention between my face and the top of her head.

“Such a good girl.” He’s ruthless when he fucks her from the floor. His hands move to her ass, holding her in place. Making her his to use. “So wet, Amara. So ours.”

I move in on them, sliding my hands beneath Carter’s violently. Amara whimpers and Carter groans as I start to shove her on top of him. Her juices glisten on his length, and I push her all the way up his body. Until I see the glistening crown of his cock. I splay a hand on her lower back, pinning her to Carter’s front.

“Kiss him.”

My hand moves from her back, my arm wrapping around her to find her clit. I rub her hard and fast, listening to the wet sounds of her pussy. Of their kisses. I lower myself to Carter’s cock, swirling my tongue around it, flicking the tip on his barbell.

His thighs strain and he’s hot and needy between my lips. Amara’s arousal fills my nose, blending so fucking well with his precum.

I need him in my mouth, though. Every inch of him. I push Amara higher on his body, open wide, and suck.

“Fuck,” he hisses. His hips jerk up, the movement causing Amara’s ass to stumble back on my face. I welcome everything about them while I bob my head up and down Carter’s length. “Your mouth, Killian. Your fucking mouth. Thank you. Thank you. Fucking thank you.”

Her scent and his envelop me. Their tastes blend in my mouth. I moan. I fucking moan as my drenched cock is desperate for a release.

Since I won’t let him come like this, I get up. Fueled by my fantasies—by the needs thrumming in my veins—I rearrange them. I hold on to the base of his cock, hoist Amara in the air, and shove her down on his length. All the way down.

“You like his big cock impaling you?” I nudge my thumb to her asshole while Amara rides Carter.

“Y-yes.” She swallows, barely able to say this one word. “Yes.”

“That’s a good girl.” I hook an arm around her, bite one of her butt cheeks and release her.

“Such a good girl,” Carter groans as I spit on my hand and lube myself some more.

I position myself between her legs, bracketing Carter’s. Our saliva run down the length of my dick, glistening in the dim light of the penthouse.

“Baby.” Carter draws her face to his, leaning up to meet her in the middle. His muscles tense beneath me and I feel them. Want them. “Remember yesterday?”

At this point, the three of us are aware we all were a part of last night. Neither of us gives a damn.

“Yes,” she moans.

I grab her hair, whipping her head to the side to have a look at her. Her eyes slide to mine.

“I’m clean,” I tell her. Tell both of them.

She winks. Fucking winks.

“You were such a good whore for me,” Carter continues when I nudge my tip to her tight asshole. She clenches, letting out the cutest, frightened mewl. “But not just for me. Because, really, the two of us were fucking you, right?”

“M-hmm.” She offers both of us a small smirk. She’s in pain, knows it’ll hurt like a mother, and she smirks.

“Be that good girl again, pet.” Carter cups her cheeks, pulling her face from me to him. His tongue darts out as he fucks her from the floor, and he licks the corner of her mouth. “Let him in.”

That’s all the warning she’s going to get. I can’t fucking take it anymore. She’s so fucking strong that she can take me.

I hold on to her waist and shove the head of my cock in her ass. She lets out a pained groan, trying to escape, by scraping the rug.

Carter growls angrily, grabbing her forearms while I yank on her hair, shoving another inch inside her. Carter's cock rocks in and out of her, and I feel him brushing my length.

A harsh breath leaves past my lips. "Christ, you're tight."

"It's too much," Amara shouts. "I can't."

"You can." Carter grinds into her slowly, sensually. "You're our good little cum slut, baby. You begged for us to be inside you. To fill you up. We're only giving you what you asked for."

Another inch.

"Stop," she cries out, her eyes wild.

"You're doing so well." Carter's voice takes on a sinister edge. "Taking both of us. Letting me feel Killian's cock while I'm balls deep inside you. The best sex of my fucking life."

"No, no more." She half cries, half smirks. I already know how obsessed I'm going to be with her brand of crazy. To the colors and glitters of her fascinating personality. "So good. But it hurts. It hurts."

Carter smirks and slows down his pace. "Now."

Amara reaches forward, attempting to escape again.

"You're not going anywhere, beautiful." I pull her back and thrust all the way inside her ass.

She screams and clenches around me. I still myself, reveling in her tightness. In the exquisite feel of Carter's cock pushing back from her pussy.

"Please."

"Be our good little whore, Amara." Craving more of *everything*, I start rocking my hips. "Take this. Take all of it."

"You hear him, pet?" Carter fucks her from beneath, one of his hands playing with her pierced nipple. "*Our* beautiful whore. You're going to be dripping so much cum by the time we're done with you."

"It hurts," she groans, but there's no mistaking the underlying satisfaction in her tone.

"We have you." I lean forward. Her clit thrums beneath my fingertip when I return to rubbing Amara. Wet, pulsing, and needy.

Except it's more than just Amara's body pushing against my fingers. It's Carter's dick too.

"You get off on that, don't you?" I pinch her clit and the delicious sound of her pained whimper fills my ears. "You want our hands and mouths and

cocks on you. Inside you. You want to hear the wet sound of our cocks stroking when we fuck you."

The ache and arousal in her choked-out "Yes" has my cock jerking inside her. I feel Carter from under me, having the same reaction. Hot, and pulsing, and *fuck*.

"So needy." Carter grabs her chin. "Tell him how much you love his cock in your ass."

Her breath hitches, and a quick look at him gives me a glimpse of the smirk on his face.

"Playing shy again, pet? Okay then, I'll start." His gaze flickers to mine, and he talks through strained breaths. "Killian, you have no idea what you do to me. Pushing me from her ass. Sliding on my dick. With our baby between us. I—uh—" They both moan from the pressure I apply on Amara's clit. "It's so good. So goddamn good."

The sound of our groans, slapping balls and cocks, and Amara's strangled pleas for more echo loud in the otherwise quiet penthouse.

"I love it," Amara says when Carter lets go of her face. "Killian, I love your cock. I love the pain. Love it."

Their eyes crawl up my body.

I'm close. About to blow my load in her tight ass. No, that won't do. I want to pull out halfway and spray what's left of my cum on Carter. Mark them both.

"Good girl." I rut into her faster, my balls slapping against Carter's cock with every stroke. "You're going to come with my cock up your ass and Carter's in your cunt."

"She's there," Carter grunts out. "Her pussy is fucking milking me."

One moment it's my name on her lips, then Carter's. Both sounds are equally delicious. Equally right. Her body is ours to play with. To fuck. To destroy, then mend it back together with our names etched on her bones.

Carter has his hand around her slender neck. Mine keeps working her clit.

Amara buries her head in Carter's shoulder, screaming so we'd both hear her. "Kiss him. Please, just kiss him."

I'm not sure who she's talking to. Both of us, if I had to guess. Doesn't even matter. We're both keen on giving it to her.

She yelps when I press my chest to her back. When Carter lifts on his forearm, sinking deeper into her. My hand leaves her clit for balance, while my other is shoved beneath Carter's neck to bring him closer to me.

Not an ounce of uncertainty passes between us before our lips collide. Our tongues dance together, our scruff probably leaving burn marks on our faces.

Amara's hungry groans and the way her body melds to our dark desires are just as hot. I break the kiss with Carter, only because I need her just the same. My lips press to the soft curve of her spine, then I suck on her skin, hard.

"Now." My cock ruts into her in a punishing rhythm. I'm done being affectionate.

His cock swells inside her. Her juices run down his cock, his balls. Soaking him and me.

"Now," Carter repeats, finishing inside her first.

His animalistic groan reverberates through the three of us. His face contorts with pleasure, his lip curled, eyes wide and pupils dilated. An image I'll have branded into my head till the day I die.

Amara lets go right after him, spasming on my cock. She trembles, her body weak, nails digging into Carter's arm. I let go of Carter, snaking an arm around Amara's torso. I hold her even as I come the hardest I ever have. I curse, thrusting until I'm all spent inside her.

Carter will get my cum another day.

We have time. All the time in the world. With my arm firm around her, I pull out, taking her with me to the floor next to Carter. She's on her back right in the middle, glancing at the two men at her sides.

"You've been so good." I caress her cheeks, snuggling her. Sharing her with Carter.

"You were perfect." Carter spins to his side, perching his head on his hand.

His fingers trace a line from Amara's collarbone to her navel, and she shivers. My fingers close on her forearm, my lips kissing her shoulder, praising her with my mouth.

Amara opens her palms to us, and we take them. The sweet girl she is, she brings them to the space over her heart. For the three of us to touch each other.

Carter presses a kiss to her nipple. Our abuse left its marks on her. Her breasts are red, starting to turn purple. Amara purrs, gazing at him, and slowly at me. Asking for something.

Affection. Not for her. We're obviously affectionate enough toward this beautiful woman who's brought us together. Who has endured two cocks stretching her.

She's asking us to show kindness to one another.

Another uncharted territory for both Carter and me.

But I do want—no, *need*—him to know this isn't just about him sharing Amara. That this isn't just sex.

It isn't. I wouldn't have obsessed over him for years—wouldn't have been abstinent from sex for three long years—if it weren't for a deeper emotion.

"Carter." I mirror his position, resting my lips on Amara's wounded temple. I raise one thumb from where our hands are entwined on Amara's chest, caressing his palm. "Thank you."

With a strand of hair falling on his forehead, he offers me a smile. This isn't his crazy one. It's a satisfied one. He's calm. Strangely so.

"Let's get Amara nice and clean and spoiled." He brings her hand to his lips and untangles himself from her hold.

Carter rises to his knees, scooping her up like she weighs nothing.

"Yay, aftercare shower." Amara wiggles her toes, her smile brightening the entire space.

Another thing I don't know about her. About them.

Then they twist their heads to where I'm perched on the rug, their eyes questioning. Including me. I'm not feeling left behind. I'm eager to learn more.

Amara outstretches her hand to me. "Killian, you coming?"

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CHAPTER NINETEEN

Amara

Carter’s fingers lather shampoo into my hair. Massaging my scalp. Killian’s at my front, his hands rubbing liquid soap to my sensitive skin.

We stand under the water spray in Killian’s shower. I’ve never been here, in this bathroom that’s identical to Carter’s. Their bedrooms look a lot alike too.

Their personalities, as well.

I see that now. Both are dominating and caring. Degrading and praising. Thoughtful lovers who wouldn’t hesitate to pull my hair or bruise my flesh.

That’s why we connect so easily. Why soon, very soon, selfies of the three of us will be decorating Killian’s bedroom walls. Then the bedrooms will be truly identical.

“Hmm.” I smile at the idea.

“Pet.” Carter's palm cradles my jaw from behind, tilting my head up to him. I close my eyes, and he’s careful, washing the suds off my hair. “What’s going on in your deviant mind?”

A lot of things.

Starting with getting the two of them to express their feelings to each other. I should go slow. Ask if this was a one-off. Say I wish it weren’t. That I don’t give a fuck what my parents would make of us. Because I don’t.

My soul levitates around them. Their connection purely magical.

Amara, get fucking real.

Yup. I should. No one’s promised me anything. Shit could get weird once we leave this shower. I get it.

So weird that Killian might ask me to pack up and leave.

Sigh.

So many questions and discussions to bring up. Except, now's neither the time nor place for it.

Besides, their hands on me feel too good to ruin it with depressing shit.

"Nothing," I mumble eventually, surrendering my body and heart to them. At least for the time being. "I'm good. Happy."

"We hurt you." Killian strokes my pierced nipple reverently.

Even through closed eyes, I hear the concern in his voice. He doesn't regret marking me. Wounding me. Reducing me to a screaming, writhing hole for them to pound into.

None of that, thank fuck.

But he does care. He wants it to feel good.

I'll never say no to that.

"What are you going to do about it?" I peek at him through one eye.

The water doesn't reach where Killian is standing. Errant drops splash on his chest and sculpted abs, nothing more. His eyes aren't dark anymore. Though they've returned to their regular brown color, he still watches over me like a hawk.

I don't expect him to be sweet. Can't imagine him smiling with affection or treating me as though I'm made of glass. But I can tell he's trying to understand me. To find out what I like. It's so fucking sweet I could squeal.

Maybe there is hope for the three of us.

What's more, Carter doesn't give him the answers. My muffin only offers Killian the necessary stuff like my safeword or how a shower or a bath as part of my aftercare are what soothes me the most. He wants Killian to make an effort. For me.

Carter presses his warm, slick front to my back. He kisses the side of my neck. The pads of his fingers stroke the sides of my breasts, his cock growing against my ass.

"Hmm." Killian watches my nipples hardening. The goosebumps spread across my skin. His large palms cup my breasts, squeezing gently, massaging them.

I sigh at the immense pleasure they're giving me. My head drops to the side, my body letting them do what they will.

Carter takes a step back, carrying me with him. Killian follows until the three of us are under the strong, delicious spray of the shower. Rivulets of

hot water run down our bodies, and my eyes flutter shut again.

“That’s how you like it, beautiful girl?” Killian’s lips rest on my forehead while he keeps touching me everywhere. “To be revered after you’ve been thoroughly fucked? That’s it?”

“I’d say I kind of earned it.”

My sassy reply earns me Killian’s smile spreading on my forehead. Carter chuckles, biting my shoulder.

“You have.” Killian’s hands slide down to my belly, rubbing circles around it before settling over Carter’s hands.

Killian doesn’t take me away from Carter. He moves in, pinning his hard cock to my stomach. He does nothing to even suggest he wants to shove it in me, though. Just like Carter doesn’t. Something tells me he wouldn’t. That he really cares to learn about me. About us.

Maybe he’ll even let me stay.

“You’ve been so good.” Killian’s lips find my wounded temple, his tongue licking circles around it.

“Our good girl.” I feel Carter opening his fingers to enlace them with Killian’s. He gives my skin open kisses with his mouth. “Our perfect pet.”

Their fingers explore my waist and each other. I can tell they’re rubbing them, squeezing each other’s hands. My heart swells and gallops at that.

Touching me, fucking me, praising me, it isn’t taboo. Their relationship, that’s different. That’ll take some getting used to.

I mean, I know Carter’s history. He’s been honest about being with both men and women, told me that when we started dating. I think it’s hot. Being free to love who you want to love can never be wrong.

He told me about his stepdad, too. Up until three years ago, Carter had seen men and women sneak out of their penthouse. Killian’s never let anyone sleep over. Then one day, it stopped. Just around that time, Carter stopped fucking around.

I’ve never connected the dots. I don’t think Carter has, either. We do now. The poor men were in love with each other and had been holding back. Whether it be the fear of change or what society could say, they’ve been fighting their attraction.

If Killian doesn’t kick me out, I’ll fix that. I’ll hold their hands, help them take this huge leap.

Not like I think they’ll need me. With their fingers interlacing on my body, it’s obvious the walls are starting to crack around their carefully

erected walls.

“Smiling again.” Killian’s lips aren’t on my temple anymore, though, his voice is still close. He’s amused. Doesn’t think I’m weird.

I giggle; I’m so happy.

Carter tucks a strand of hair behind my ear. “Care to share, pet?”

My eyes open. I blink against the water cascading down my face. Killian towers over me, his hair wet, his gaze curious. I twist my head to the side, watching Carter’s black hair soaked on his forehead. His gray eyes lit up.

“If you want something”—Killian grips me harder—“you ask for it.”

“Anything at all,” Carter adds. Both of them tighten their hold on me. Giving me lots of sweet torture. “It’s yours.”

Another giggle escapes me. I should’ve guessed they’d complete each other’s sentences. I can’t wait to find out what else I was right about.

“Now I *know* you’re thinking something dirty.” Carter glides his hands higher, taking Killian’s with him.

“Say it.” Killian uses his dominating tone.

I rake my teeth along my bottom lip. “I…”

Carter pushes against my back. Killian to my front.

Their hard bodies mash my softer frame. Their controlling presence overwhelms me. I’m overtaken by their beauty.

“You…?” Killian probes.

“I want your lips.”

I’m aware that asking for anything overly intimate might be pushing it. So, same as before, I tread lightly. A kiss isn’t as huge of a deal as *Lather soap on Carter’s body*, or *Massage muffin’s silky hair*. It doesn’t take much work. It’s just a kiss.

Mouths and tongues are easier. We’ve done it already, kind of.

Not the three of us.

Carter’s hand curls around my throat, and he tilts my head up, offering me to Killian. A groan escapes me when Carter’s scruff chafes on my cheek, a sign that he’s there for me. For us.

Killian leans in, one of his hands on my cheek.

Before he presses his lips to mine, I shake my head.

“Yours and Carter’s.” I part mine, inviting them. “Together.”

“Not as filthy as I thought.” Carter applies the slightest pressure to tilt my head up. “Still love the idea.”

Butterflies assault my stomach at the mention of the word *love* from Carter. We haven't said our *I love yous* yet, but I can sense it coming.

Can smell it.

Can feel it when he presses the corner of his mouth to mine. Our eyes lock on Killian's. Calling him.

One of his hands remains firm on my cheek. The other one lets go of my waist. Of Carter.

For a brief moment, I worry he'll revert to the strict version of himself. That he might think we're too much. Everything's so new.

Killian eliminates my fears. He inches closer. Raises his hand to cup Carter's jaw. Presses his lips to where Carter's and mine connect.

Wow.

My heart races as their mouths touch mine. They move their lips, their tongues exploring mine and each other's, and fuck, I struggle to breathe.

This is everything I've dreamed it would be.

I cling on to Killian, locking my knees to keep them from buckling. It feels too good to be true. I'm at a melting temperature, and the hot water has nothing to do with it.

It's them. Our lips glide smoothly together. We lick and nip at each other's mouths and tongues, diving deeper. Breathing harder. Hands and hot bodies touch and caress and stroke. I can't tell where they end and I begin. I just can't.

I inhale their scent. I feel them. Until the water goes cold, until I'm well and truly spent, I revel in the most wonderful symphony ever known to mankind.

They help me out of the bathroom, then the two men dry me off. One of them carries me to Killian's bed. I have no idea who, since my eyes are heavy and my brain is foggy. I'm exhausted and blissed out.

I'm out of it. And this out-of-it state gives me the courage I need to ask, behind closed eyes. "Can I stay here?"

The firm "Yes" and "Always" wash over me and send me straight into a peaceful sleep.

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CHAPTER TWENTY

Carter

My eyes blink open to a familiar feeling.

One of Amara's legs drapes over mine. The other slides between my thighs. Her hot, naked pussy and tits press against the front of my body. Jasmine. Soft curves. Shallow breath tickling my chest.

The room's dark, so it's safe to assume it's sometime around the middle of the night. Doesn't matter though. I see my beautiful pet.

Her eyelids are heavy on her beautiful eyes, eyelashes resting peacefully on her pink cheeks. I'm already brimming with desire for her.

She's sleeping and still seeks me out. I'll never tire of that.

Out of habit—same as I've done many times before—I take her with me as I scoot to a sitting position. Ready to feed her my cock. Get her teeth scraping my shaft and giving me the most delicious kind of pain as I face-fuck her while she sleeps.

My dick swells just thinking about her waking up from gagging on me. How fast she comes when she has my seed for breakfast instead of coffee.

The tip of my cock presses to her plump lips. Aching to push against them. Past them.

And… I don't do it. For the first time since Amara and I started dating, I stop myself from violating her while she sleeps.

My instincts scream to put her mouth where it belongs. My ever-softening heart twists, forcing me to stop. My fingers are dug deep in her silky tresses, ready to do it, and I can't.

I'm split in half, because there's a void in this bed that's not mine.

Because something’s missing.

Someone.

Killian.

The memories of this evening slowly creep up on me, and like a really good fucking nightmare, I can see—no, *feel*—everything.

Amara is the magnet that brings the two of us together. Without her, Killian and I wouldn’t have been here.

Without her, Killian’s resistance wouldn’t have snapped twice—first for her, then me.

But I need him just the same.

Everything fell into place today, every fucking thing. The way we sandwiched her. His mouth, his cock, his balls, all the while I had her with me. I had them both.

The dam came down. All hell broke loose. Our safe reality was drowned out. Fuck, yeah, I heard the bitch choke on her way down.

Nothing’s safe anymore. Being together means we’re vulnerable.

Amara hums something in her sleep. Adorable little thing. I release her hair, stroking it reverently. Maybe one day when the words *I love you* won’t choke me, I’ll be able to tell her how I feel.

Until then, I’ll give her what she wants. What *we* want.

Chaos and calamity. The three of us for-fucking-ever.

We’re never going back to what we were. Never.

“He’s right, you know?” I whisper to the sleeping Amara as I pull Killian’s blanket up to her shoulders. “You’re beautiful, pet. So beautiful. Every fucking inch of your body and every cavern of your twisted little soul. So beautiful that I have to hold myself from chopping off one of your fingers and making a pendant from it.”

With thoughts of her thumb on a necklace around my neck, I kiss her forehead and slip out of bed to hunt for Killian.

I’m not looking to fuck him. I need to talk, which is strange. I never do that, except when I have to. And tonight, I do. Tonight I have to clear the air between him and I. Privately.

Amara would understand. Hell, the way she was today, how she insisted on us touching each other—she’d probably have encouraged me to do it.

My dirty angel.

I’m silent as I walk over to Killian’s closet instead of heading to mine.

My cock jerks again as I slip on the boxers *he* wore. Yes, they've been washed, but still. His ass, balls, and dick were where mine are now. Precum might've stained them at one point.

Fuck, I can't go there. I can't get hard for this conversation.

Shaking myself out of it, I pull on one of his black sweats, going to his bathroom next. My reflection smiles back at me, my grin a wicked one as I use Killian's toothbrush. Imagine Amara using it as well. The ultimate sharing.

Killian will probably have a fit. So freaking what. He'll learn to accept it. Will learn to love it.

Once done, I step out of the room, careful to shut the door quietly behind me. Outside, in the hallway of the second floor, it doesn't take more than a second for me to find him.

Light filters beneath the door to our study.

He's working. Always working.

At any given time, there's this or that issue that needs to be handled for our hotel.

New members to vet. Members that require monitoring. Meetings to schedule and other bureaucratic shit to handle.

Most of it can wait until the morning. A concept Killian's insomniac ass struggles to comprehend.

It grates on my nerves when he briefs me on everything in the morning. Keep telling him he should try and go to bed or at least do something fun. Let me handle shit in the morning.

Over the years, I've come to learn he won't listen. Stubborn fucker.

I open the door, leaning on the doorframe. I don't knock when I enter the office. Never do.

"Hey," I offer after a few minutes of silence. Even I have my creeper limits.

Killian twists his attention from his laptop to me. "Carter."

Shirtless and unshaven, he looks regal as fuck behind our mahogany desk. The lamp by his side does nothing to soften his sharp features. Nothing can soften Killian. Not even the homey feeling of our home office.

Wooden bookshelves, the expensive Persian rug, the antique leather couch.

None of that touches Killian.

Well, maybe other than Amara and now me.

He’s as harsh and strong as ever. The man I’ve idolized since I can remember.

“Busy?”

Of course he is. He’s serious. Deep in thought. Much like he looked on my fourteenth birthday. The first time he introduced me to what our hotel really deals in.

When he started treating me like an adult, business-wise.

“Today is the first step in your four-year internship, Carter.”

We were at his office in the hotel. He sat behind his desk, while I occupied the chair across from him. Finally, after years of begging him, I was dressed in a fitted black suit. Just like him.

I wasn’t attracted to him back then. I admired him. Wanted to be him.

He didn’t have weaknesses. Nothing broke through his rough exterior. Always composed and respected wherever he went. Especially here.

Especially after they’d leave his office bloodied or with their heads bowed in humiliation. I’d been a kid waiting outside for him to be finished when they walked out wounded, but I’d understood the power he had over them. How he fucked people up.

I wanted that. Fucking craved that.

Now that he’d let me in.

Excitement at wreaking havoc and cracking skulls brimmed beneath my skin.

I’d been visiting the gym in our apartment building. Lifting weights. Started boxing. My knuckles were raw from pummeling into the punching bag. My muscles primed to be put to good use. A violent use.

“So ready.” I gripped the arms of the chair, fingers clenching and unclenching. “I’m strong enough to break someone’s nose, Killian. To crack ribs. My boxing partner’s still at the hospital after last night. I can beat anyone up for you. Let me.”

“Easy there.” His lips twitched. Quickly, he schooled them back to the straight, firm line he’d been known for. “Beating people up isn’t the main focus of our business.”

My brow furrowed. I was motherfucking confused.

“I saw them,” I accused.

“Yeah, you did.” He steepled his fingers on the desk. “Hurting members who step out of line is one aspect of our job. A necessity to toe the line. Our

main focus, though, is running this hotel and keeping the peace around here."

He continued then to elaborate on every boring task and routine. Suppliers, paying taxes, the member vetting process. What mediating means, and why Killian—and now, we—were the ones to handle it.

They trusted him to do it. He was as ruthless as the rest of them, but he had no weakness. He had morals, though. Every low life, every politician passing through our doors, they were crooked as fuck. Killian could tell left from right better than any of them ever could.

I'd taken that for granted at the time. Suppressed my yawns through the whole lecture. Surely, the juicy bits were just around the corner.

When he got to the rules, my ears perked up.

Finally.

"It's vital you remember"—his eyes narrowed as he leaned forward —"we don't go around beating people up for no reason. We're here to maintain the peace, not to use people as our punching bags for the fuck of it."

"What if—"

"Otherwise." Killian's forefinger was raised, silencing me. "We'll be just like the rest of them. They'll sniff it out. What would happen then?"

"They'll turn on us, then run off somewhere else," I growled. "The cowards."

"Correct. You're a clever boy, Carter." His approval washed over me, warm and strange and addictive. "This internship won't be easy, even for a smart young man like you. These people are savages. Not to mention all the knowledge I have to pass on to you. You'll still go to school, make no mistake. The rest of the time you'll spend here. You won't sleep much. Your social life will be nonexistent. Then, at eighteen, if you're ready—"

"I motherfucking will be." Mirroring his stance, I leaned forward, my forearms resting on the desk. "You know I will."

"I hope so." He didn't scold me for cussing, continuing as if I didn't breathe fire and swear in his office. "Then, I'll make you an official partner here. An owner. Would you like that?"

My eyebrows shot up. "When do we start?"

His lips quirked in an evil smirk. "You start by shadowing one of our housekeepers for three hours. Natalie. That's how interns start. From the bottom. When you're done, come find me, and we'll go from there."

I agreed right away. Didn't give him the I'm too good for this shit *manifesto.*

Kids cried like little bitches. I wasn't no fucking kid anymore.

I was a man.

And here I am, years later. His equal.

His partner.

"Always something to do." He beckons me to come in.

I don't.

His words are loaded. His words could imply he's regretting this evening.

Fuck that.

Reminding him we aren't wrong, I stroke my abs and play with the waistband of his sweats I'm wearing, steering him in the right direction.

His eyes go down there for a second too long before he cuts them to mine. He doesn't look flustered. Jaw strong, gaze intense. "Come inside. Shut the door behind you."

He gives me nothing. Noncommittal as always. A walking, talking mindfuck. It's the one trait he couldn't ingrain in me. I wear my crazy on my sleeve. He hides his. Religiously.

"Sure." I do as he says, lowering myself on the leather armchair in front of him.

"Not there." Killian surprises me by getting up, motioning with his head to the couch, while arranging his sweatpants. "Over there. I believe you came here to talk. Let's talk."

Knots twist my stomach now that we're actually doing this.

He's right. I came here for answers. I came here for clarity.

Might as well get it over with.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Killian

If Carter had a kryptonite, it'd be heart-to-heart talks. I've avoided them for years for his benefit. Never pressed him for a reaction after I told him his mother's tragic story.

The concept of opening up about my feelings isn't something I'm looking forward to, either. Unfortunately, it's not like we have a choice. This situation isn't one we can dance around. We can't fuck, sleep together, and then what? Hope for the best?

I haven't survived in this business for years by leaving things to chance.

"About the three of us," I start, leaving it hanging in the air, studying him.

His agitation is a living, breathing thing. He chews and sucks on the inside of his cheek. Clenches his fists in his lap. He sits on the couch as I instructed, but he might as well have been hopping from one wall to another.

"We're happening," he snaps. He and I are on either side of the couch, and yet it's like he said it in my ear. His demand is silent, determined. "Don't fucking lie to me. Don't say you're not in."

My eyebrows shoot up my forehead. This fucking ki—guy. Never stops surprising me. "Carter—"

"Don't fucking *Carter* me." He points an accusing finger in my direction. "You don't get to be a fucking coward."

"Watch your mouth."

His cursing doesn't bother me. His attitude does. I've been treating him like an adult for years now. This adolescent shit won't fly. Whether we're fucking each other or not.

Whether I…

Never mind.

"Sorry." His unruly hair parts when his fingers rake through it. "Yeah, you're my stepdad. Yes, some people think you're my dad." He rolls his eyes. "They'll judge us for that. They'll come for us the day we come out with this. Target Amara. If they find out about it. I'm aware. Doesn't matter. We're doing this. I'm not letting go of what we started this evening."

His speech gives me pause. This isn't going how I thought it would.

I was going to suggest the three of us ease our way into this. Let them get used to me. While I answered emails earlier, my mind wandered to the two people in my bed. Tonight was on my mind, then our future.

At no point did I expect them to jump into a relationship headfirst. Wanted it, sure. Didn't expect it to happen. Not this soon.

"You talked about this with Amara?" I cross my arms on my chest, defensively. I can't fucking help it. I hate uncertainties. Hate opening my heart up. Goddamn loathe this…*weakness*.

"Don't need to." He scowls. Where I'm skeptical, Carter drives right through any obstacle in his way. Any obstacle other than telling Amara about our hotel, I suspect. "I can tell she's in."

I cock my head to the side, eyeing him skeptically.

"Listen, I know Amara." He scoots closer.

Electricity buzzes through me at the contact of our knees. I grind my teeth. My biceps flex. Now, I'm the one nervous. Fucking spectacular.

"This thing she and I have, it's important to her. Just as much as it's important to me. I would *never* cheat on her, and she wouldn't cheat on me. Before you say anything, she sure as shit is not bored." He dips his chin, giving me a meaningful glare. "I work hard so that won't happen."

He stops there. I don't say a word. I need more than that.

"What I'm trying to say is, being with us is more than just sex for her. For some reason, my complicated, beautiful woman likes you. Us." In a very unlike Carter fashion, words spill from him. Proving to me how deeply he feels about the idea. "If it would've been just sex, she wouldn't have agreed to any of it. She wouldn't have jeopardized what we have for sex. I"—he splays his palm on his naked chest—"wouldn't have. Her parents and sister

are assholes enough. I take pride in knowing I won't be that person in her life. So, yeah, safe to say she's in. We're in."

He leans his elbow on the cushion, the moonlight making his eyes twinkle. Letting the information sink in.

"I'll still need to hear her consent." I don't ask about the part about her family. This isn't the place. That isn't his secret to tell.

"You will." No stories or gossip from Carter. Good fucking boy. "What else?"

"I do have to ask." Because my cold heart can and will snap depending on his answer. "Are you doing this for her?"

A small smirk—a wicked one—crosses more than just his lips. His entire face lights up.

Fuck, do I want to kiss him. To hug him. See how he'd fit in my arms. In bed, we had Amara mashed between us. But how would it feel, just he and I?

My fingers flex, itching to see for myself. I clench them into a fist just as fast. His eyes zoom in on the action.

"Well?" I call his attention back to my face.

"No." His honesty purge ends there. No. Just no.

I'm not satisfied. "Are you serious about it?"

"What do you mean?" The twinkle of joy in him diminishes. "Can't you tell? I thought I was being clear before."

"We've been the only meaningful person in each other's lives for years." I ignore the clouds descending on his gray eyes. Overlook the simmering anger. "We've never been apart for over a day. You might confuse the love for a father figure to a—"

"*Step*, Killian." He does what I can't, grabbing my hand in both of his strong ones. His voice is a rugged growl. "*Step*father. We're not blood-related."

"I'm the only parent you've ever known." I'm not being fair for pressing him. But he has to think this through. This isn't some kinky adventure.

"*Step* fucking parent." He squeezes my fingers angrily. I glower at him to calm the fuck down, and he does. "Fuck you for the fucking insinuation. I'm not confused. I'm not a kid. I'm a twenty-five-year-old *man*. I know what I want."

"Okay." On its own accord, my thumb rubs the inside of his wrist, soothing his jacked-up pulse. "And what's that?"

He licks his top lip, curses, and looks away before searing me with his gaze again. “You. You and Amara together. Why is that so hard for you to understand?”

The right answer would be *because, for the better part of my life, you’ve been a kid to me.* My *kid. Then you became Amara’s. For six months I’ve been sure your love started and ended there.*

It’s too much of an admission. Too emotional. Too fucking deep for this time of night. One of these days, I’ll use big words like love and obsession.

“Everything happened so fast.” I resign to the second-best answer. “I didn’t see it coming.”

“Oh, really? That’s what you tell yourself?” He tightens his hold on my hand, his grip turning affectionate. “Neither of us is blind to it, Kill. On some level, we’ve seen it coming. I haven’t missed the looks you give me. I haven’t missed you getting hard around me. I don’t believe for a second you haven’t noticed me doing the same up until I started dating Amara.”

“Your dirty fucking mouth.” My eyes roam across his body. To my sweats that he’s wearing.

My sweats.

His erection tents them. Tents the goddamn clothes *I’ll* wear later.

Jesus fucking Christ.

“See?” He jerks his chin to my painfully hard cock. “We’ve had *this* going on for three years. I haven’t been fucking around during that time. Then Amara came, and fuck, she’s everything. From the very first moment, I couldn’t imagine a life with her not in it. I thought you’d never come for me. That’s why I set the idea of you aside. Have been loyal to her in my heart and soul. But we don’t have to choose anymore, do we?”

He moves in closer. I smell my toothpaste on his breath. See every hair of his stubble. The shadows under his high cheekbones. His full lips.

“You haven’t been with anyone either.” Carter’s determined tone dares me to tell him otherwise. “Haven’t brought anyone over.”

“I haven’t had sex in three years, no. Not since I…” Love isn’t the word.

I do love him. He’s the only person I’ve ever loved other than my parents who died when they were young. Both from a stray bullet—the reason I entered this world to begin with.

Is it this kind of love, though? A romantic one? Could be. No fucking clue. I’m not about to drag Carter into my mess.

“Since the first time, I found that I was attracted to you.”

“Because I’m the only family you’ve got?” He’s not taken aback by my confession. He’s taunting me. Throwing my question back in my face.

“This isn’t the same thing.” *You’re younger. More impressionable.* “And no. I’m attracted to you because of you. That’s that.”

“Do you like Amara”—he quirks a teasing eyebrow—“because she’s been hanging out here? Because you got used to her being around?”

“No,” I admit the truth. “You don’t need me repeating that. You overheard what I told her.”

“Yes.” He’s unapologetic about listening in on us. Smirks in triumph.

Another emotion shines behind his playfulness. One I never witnessed on Carter’s face before he met Amara.

A foreign emotion on Carter.

A good one.

I’m glad for the change of subject. Fucking him without her in the room—without discussing how this should work—would’ve been wrong. Selfish and wrong. Amara deserves better.

“Does she know?” I continue in that direction. When Carter’s confidence morphs to confusion, I clarify, “That you love her.”

He pauses. His hold on my hand loosens.

He loves her, that’s for goddamn sure. He’s clueless about how to handle it, but he loves her.

“Not yet. I mean, it’s not a fucking secret I’m obsessed with her. That she’s mine even if I don’t call her my girlfriend.” His lips twist. “I’ll tell her. I should. Soon.”

“Good.” Last item on the list. I squeeze his hand one final time before pulling away. “Carter, we have to set boundaries. We’ll discuss them with Amara later, let her set hers as well. If there’s one thing I know, though, what just happened wasn’t right. We’re here, and a second ago, we were about to jump at each other. That needs to be addressed.”

“No screwing around behind each other’s backs.” He reads my mind. “Gotcha.”

“If that’s okay with Amara, of course.” Air expands my lungs. “Fucking in duos is fine. It’s that sneaking around feeling I’m looking to avoid.”

“I second that,” he says earnestly, his eyes flicking to the door. “Anything else or are we going back to bed?”

“The hotel.” The two loaded words grab his full attention.

“She has no idea what we do there,” Carter tells me what I already suspected.

“There’s no reason for her not to know,” I state another obvious fact. Amara won’t open her mouth if we ask her to keep our secret. She’s far better than the likes of fucking Preston. “She’s a part of us. Has been for six months now.”

“No.”

“Why?”

“Honestly? I’m afraid we’ll lose her if she finds out.” He groans, his shoulders slacking. “She’s special. She can take everything. Thing is, I’m worried she won’t take our job well. That she’ll leave. Then I’ll have to lock her up here with us, but she might not like that either.”

There’s fear in his eyes. Genuine fear of losing her.

Voltage has always been a source of pride for me. Carter’s proud of his job as well. We haven’t had a reason not to be.

I see where he’s coming from, though.

Then again, the hotel isn’t going anywhere. Carter might as well own up to what we’re doing.

“You should give her the choice, Carter. Lying or omitting the truth is worse. Selfish. You’re hurting her.” My brows furl. “She thinks we’re embarrassed to be seen with her. I’ve caught glimpses of her pouting at the hotel. I’ve been playing your game, and I think it’s time to end it. It’s killing her. It’s killing me, watching the rejection on her face.”

“Been stalking us, Kill?” Instead of being mad, his lips hike to the side. “Preparing this speech for the day your fantasies came true?”

“I never dreamed it’d happen. I would’ve said something, eventually. You’re my business.” I wrap a hand around the side of his neck. “Meaning she’s my business.”

The vein in Carter’s neck thumps beneath my fingers. “Damn right, we are.”

“You’re putting her at risk every day you’re not telling her. Every day she doesn’t know someone might find out about you and her. About us.” That wipes the smile off his face. “This isn’t me meddling. This is me protecting her. We can’t put security on her because she doesn’t know. Because no one can know about us until we’re ready. When we come out, our plan will have to be airtight. We’ll find a way to come out without anyone blaming me for

grooming you. I don’t need to explain to you what they’ll do to us if the hotel closes.”

He rubs his temples. “Yeah, you’re right.”

“It won’t be easy, but there’s no other way to handle it. You’ll have to tell her,” I summarize, getting to my feet. “About time.”

“I will. This month.” Following my lead, he stands up. “Or in two.”

My glower would normally destroy any other man. Not Carter.

“This selfish person isn’t you, Carter.”

“I’m a ruthless fuck who does what he thinks is right.” There’s that smile again. “While taking care of the people he loves.”

I nod. We walk to the door, heading to my bedroom side by side. Settling on either side of Amara. Doubts and every negative scenario run rampant in my head. Then Amara wiggles her ass against my cock in her sleep and Carter drapes his arm over us.

For a few more hours, I have my peace.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Amara

I’m dreaming. A dream where I’m assaulted by an octopus.

Rough tentacles touch me everywhere. The front and back of my body. My entire skin lights up at the animal’s attention.

Wow.

Breathing underwater would be cool if that’s what I’d find there.

“Pet.” The tentacle at my neck sucks hard on my flesh.

Do octopuses even speak?

“Beautiful girl.” Another tentacle teases my tight hole.

Naughty octopus.

Unfortunately for him, I’m taken. At that notion, my heavy eyelids finally blink open like daisies opening their petals to the morning light.

No octopus.

I’m not a mermaid, nor am I being groped and loved on by an underwater lover.

It’s barely sunrise and I’m still in Killian’s bed. Being kissed, touched, and bitten by what has to be a person. Two of them, actually.

Carter’s wide smile is the first thing I see. When I glimpse behind my shoulder, I’m met with Killian’s dark brown eyes.

Both of them are here.

Yesterday wasn’t one and done. It wasn’t.

Holy fuck.

I’m so happy I might explode. Carter will be upset if I do. I hope the tiny pieces of my flesh will comfort him.

I hope…

“There she is.” Carter’s hoarse voice calls for my attention.

“Morning.” Killian grips my chin, tilting me to look back at his dark gaze. Absolutely deviant.

He leans in, closing the lids on those intense brown orbs. I let mine flutter shut with his. I let Carter kiss up my jawline, and Killian brushes his lips against mine.

They’re being tender, despite the fire I’ve witnessed in their eyes. Their hands grab me in a brutal, sexy way. Their breath smells of delicious mint.

“Crap.” My eyes snap open. I push against them, scrambling to get up. “I have to brush my teeth.”

While Carter doesn’t mind morning breath, period blood, and pretty much anything else, Killian might hate it. All of it.

“No, you don’t.” Carter grabs my thigh from under, hiking one of my legs around his waist, pressing me to his erection. “You’re not leaving this bed.”

“Absolutely not,” Killian groans, sliding two fingers into my pussy and pushing up to the last knuckle.

“You’re perfect”—with Killian at one corner of my mouth, Carter pushes my face so he can kiss the other corner—“just the way you are.”

Their cocks are pressed against me. Hands gripping everywhere. Their tongues swipe across my lips, demanding me to open for them. I moan as I do, getting lost in their adoration. In their hot, demanding bodies.

My hands reach to both sides. I grasp the men’s necks, reveling in how their scruffs scrape my fingertips.

Both men give in easily when I pull them closer until their tongues rub together. They’re done being tentative.

They take and take and take. Their lips move on me and on each other. Their groans and the manly sounds they make turn me on. I answer them with my own needy moans. With my tongue swirling with theirs.

“Fuck, you’re dripping for us.” Killian drags his fingers in a painfully slow rhythm in and out of me. “Soaked. But you’re still so fucking tight.”

“Have been having dreams again, kinky girl?” Carter takes my mouth when Killian’s teeth lower to my shoulder and bite. “I thought I heard your naughty mouth moan when I woke up earlier.”

“Eeep!” Killian’s bite hurts so deliciously. His tongue relieving the wounded area makes it better.

So. Much. Better.

“Your nipples were taut little peaks.” For emphasis, Carter slithers his hand from my hip to my piercing. Tugs. This gorgeous, sadistic man smirks at my scream-turned-to-moan. “Dammit. Had to have been a really filthy dream.”

“Octopus.” I bite my lip. I grin at him and turn to Killian who keeps licking and nipping my shoulder, neck, cheek. “An octopus fucked me.”

One bark of a laugh at my back. A sinister smile at my front.

“We did have our arms and legs all over you.” Carter swipes his tongue along my jaw, lowering to my shoulder. To Killian. “Our mouths. Our fingers.”

“We’re still not an octopus, though,” Killian teases. “Will that be a problem?”

“No.”

I hear him and Carter kissing. See Killian’s hand on Carter’s cheek. Feel Carter kneading my nipple. Shiver when their lips return to mine.

Killian pulls his fingers out of me, grinding his cock to my ass. His mouth does obscene things to the crook of my neck. Then to Carter’s mouth while raking his fingers in his hair.

“Big tentacles to fill,” Carter adds, his voice thick with desire.

His thumb finds my clit and presses hard. I arch my back, gasping. Barely breathing with the pleasure assaulting me from both sides.

“I’d take my two lions over an octopus any day,” I whisper.

“Twisted little pet.” Carter drives a finger into my slit.

“We’ll just have to give you what you’re asking for, then.” Killian’s hand slips to my belly. I gaze lower, watching him curl his fingers around Carter’s throbbing cock. “You, too.”

Carter hisses a curse when Killian uses Carter’s precum to rub along his shaft. Killian grinds his cock to the small of my back while angling Carter’s dick to my stomach. He strokes him, brings him closer to his hand, and Carter’s cock on my belly.

Carter’s arousal smears on my skin at the same time Killian’s arousal dampens my back.

To say this is the hottest thing I’ve been a part of is the understatement of the century.

“You like that?” Killian’s hand moves faster, squeezing Carter.

I have no idea who he’s addressing. We both answer.

Carter grunts out a, “Fuck, yes,” before returning to suck and nip on my lips and neck. I groan. Loudly.

“And that?” Without any preamble, Killian releases Carter’s cock to position his own against my pussy and shoves inside. “Do you like that, beautiful girl?”

“Yes.” I search for him blindly, my fingernails scraping into Killian’s tattooed biceps. “Please.”

“So hungry for cock.” Killian rocks his hips, filling me with him. “Aren’t you, beautiful girl?”

“Yes,” I repeat, my tits bouncing every time Killian bottoms out in me.

“Say it again.” Gray eyes eat me up. His fingers dig into my chin.

“Yes,” I cry out.

“Good girl.” Carter moves to sit against the headboard, fisting my hair.

As if they’ve coordinated it for years, Killian gets what Carter wants. He flips himself and me, kneeling behind me and positioning my head on Carter’s lap.

“You’re going to get it.” Killian grips my hips, pushing into me again. Driving harder. His hand lands on my butt cheek, spanking me. “Every inch. Every drop of cum, Amara.”

“You’ll take us like the good girl you are.” The corner of Carter’s lips tips up. Right before he pushes my mouth down on his cock.

I blink at him, at how he grinds his teeth. He doesn’t fuck my face, just shoves me all the way down. Letting me drool on his groin, down his balls. Forcing me to stay in place while Killian rocks against me. While I scratch Carter’s strong thighs.

“Jesus,” Killian groans behind me. He spanks me, and I cry out onto Carter’s dick. “I could fuck you for hours, Amara. With your mouth on his cock, I’ll never stop.”

“I could come so hard just from your hot little mouth. That and watching Kill rail you. Your juices on his cock, fuck.” Carter grips my hair tighter, pulling hard. But the knuckles of his other hand run along my bruised temple. Loving and hurting me. Until his eyes turn vicious as he looks up at Killian. “Don’t hold back. She likes it rough. Fucking loves it.”

“Does she now?” Killian slams harder into me, jerking my body forward on Carter, making me gag. “You wanted harder, you should’ve asked for it, beautiful girl.”

My thighs clench, my breasts heavy and desperate to be touched. The pressure in my lower stomach builds, burning me from the inside out.

"On second thought, you don't have to say a damn thing." Killian's fingers sink into the butt cheek he spanked. Hurting me so good. "Your greedy pussy sucks me right in. Greedy"—*spank*— "cunt."

"Oh, fuck." Carter begins to drag my head up and down to Killian's rhythm. His piercing caresses the back of my throat. His salty precum leaks on my tongue. "Fuck our pretty little whore until I come in her mouth."

My forehead is glued to Carter's lower stomach, my nose mashed to his skin. I'm breathing, floating, giving as much as I'm taking.

They move inside me, behind me. Loving me. I'm more than a hole for them. I'm spoiled to my core. Used exactly like I dreamed of. They give me their bodies. Their words. Their everything.

I asked to be theirs, and they're relentless at giving me exactly that.

"Look at me," Carter demands.

I lift my gaze as much as physically possible. He has night skies for eyes and a sneer that could ruin anyone's panties.

The sadist that he is, he breaks our eye connection, casting his attention higher. To Killian.

"Let me see your cock," he asks. Not demands, not orders. Carter, between hissed moans and tortured grunts, says, "I can barely see how wet you are with her. I need to fucking see it."

"Here." Killian flattens a hand on my lower back, pushing me lower while tilting my hips up. "Watch how I fuck her. Watch how soaked I am with our Amara."

I don't see anything other than Carter's face. I feel them, though. How they swell inside me. How their voices are strained. Their grip on me becomes more and more vicious.

They're losing their control.

So am I.

"I'm close." Carter grits his teeth. "Killian, I'm fucking close."

"Amara first," Killian thunders at my back. Each stroke of his cocks goes deeper. Beating me from the inside. Hitting my womb. "Make her fucking come."

My body heats, my clit flutters at Killian's order. At the smirk on Carter's face, and how quick he is to reach for my breast. Pinching and twisting just the way I like.

“You choke on my cock so well, pet.” His words light a fire to my core. He knows what his dirty mouth does to me. “Gonna give you my cum. I have so much to give you, baby, it’s going to leak out your nose.”

A sound of approval extends from Killian. Carter snarls, satisfaction bleeding through every handsome, harsh feature on his face.

Killian bends on top of me, his fingers finding my clit, rubbing me. My eyes roll at the impending orgasm. I’m almost there. In a split second, I’ll come on his cock. I’ll scream on Carter’s.

“When he comes, Amara, you’re not allowed to swallow.” Killian seethes. “You’ll be lubing my cock with it.”

My brows furrow as Carter starts fucking my face harder. My pussy clenches tighter around Killian.

“Carter’s going to need it.” Killian hits my G-spot with his cock. Rubs me in the right place. “So I can fuck his ass while you ride my face.”

“Fucking come, Amara.” Carter’s undivided attention lands on me, his fingers pulling at my nipple until I scream on his cock. He’s a thundering god. An all-consuming devil. His need burns through him and pummels into me. “You have to come or I’ll fucking lose it.”

That’s all my Carter has to say for it to happen. He owns me so thoroughly that my body doesn’t think twice before obeying him.

My orgasm rips me in half. My soul quakes with intensity. Instead of letting up so I can breathe, Carter pushes me mercilessly into his cock. On impulse, I wiggle between the two men, sucking air through my nose.

They’re as intense as ever. Fucking my holes. Carter groans a few pumps later, shooting load after load of his cum in my mouth. He hisses my name, then Killian’s.

He wasn’t lying about having a lot of it. I hold everything I can, but some spills out, dribbling down my chin.

“Don’t swallow and do not spit.” Killian’s orders have the same force on me that Carter’s do.

My gray-eyed lover helps me. He gathers his excess seed from my chin, pushing his thumb in my mouth, stuffing me with himself.

“Good little one,” he praises, stroking my bloated cheeks.

Killian pulls out of me and settles on his back on the bed.

“Spit on his cock,” Carter’s order comes before he helps me on the bed. He settles me between Killian’s muscular legs. As they pass me from one to

the other like a ragdoll, Killian makes a ponytail of my tangled hair. “Make it wet for my ass, baby. Like you did with my spit last night.”

“Good girl. Right…” Killian positions my head on top of the swollen, hard cock he holds up to me. “Here.”

With tears of exertion in my eyes, I release Carter’s cum on Killian’s dick.

“Beautiful girl.” Killian’s tug on my hair has my head snapping up to look at him. “Get up on my face before I spank your pretty pussy raw.”

I’m weak, my muscles trembling. Carter can tell the orgasm tore my body in half, leaving me limbless. He gets behind me, guiding my hands to the mattress.

His hot breath tingles the shell of my ear. “Crawl to him.”

I do, putting my knees around Killian’s head. I rise to my knees, placing both hands on the headboard.

“Look back.” Killian sees through me. Gets what I long for equally as having my pussy eaten. “Watch my cock disappear inside Carter’s ass.”

I twist my head, my chest heaving. The need to watch the two men I idolize connect like this is explosive.

Killian’s hands grab onto Carter’s hips, helping him down. Carter’s lips twitch when Killian’s head nudges at his opening.

“Breathe,” Killian instructs. He’s rougher with him than he was with me yesterday. Every bit as sadist as Carter is. “Breathe and get on my fucking dick already.”

“You’re fucking big, have you noticed that?” Carter quirks an eyebrow, but his cock jerks. “Not to mention I’ve never been fucked there.”

“You’re mine now.” The muscles on Killian’s forearms strain when he punishes Carter by pushing him down, stretching his asshole. “And Amara took both of us. You have no excuse.”

“Amara loves getting it in both her holes.” Carter’s psycho grin flashes. His hand is on my hair, forcing my face to his as he leans forward. “Amara’s had six months to learn how to take it up her ass.”

He doesn’t move like that just to toy with me. His shift forward gives him a better angle. Helps Killian sink into him.

And then it happens.

I see the moment the head slips past his tight bundle of nerves.

“Oh, fuck.” Carter’s mouth gapes.

Killian growls right under my head. Carter huffs and curses against my cheek. Killian twists his head to bite the inside of my thigh. I'm just as much a part of this as they are. Like they're filling me too.

"Come here." Killian forces Carter all the way down.

Carter's hold on me loosens, his eyes pinching shut. When he opens them again, they're no longer tortured. They're black. Pitch black. He looks incredibly alive in the darkness. A glare I've only witnessed on him when he's making me cry. One he saves for me alone.

And now for Killian.

My heart pounds louder against its cage. My first instinct is to twist out of Carter's grip and ask Killian if he sees how gorgeous Carter is.

Except Killian's already watching him. I can tell by how hard his fingers clench on Carter, by his hissed, "You're beautiful."

"Sit the fuck down, Amara." Killian moves his hands to my hips, his hold harsh and unforgiving. "Or I'll come before I suck on your clit. I don't have to tell you how mad it'll make me."

He's right. I don't have to be told twice. Clutching the headboard while still looking into Carter's dark gaze, I slide down to Killian's mouth. His tongue connects with my clit and he growls, sounding furious and feral.

Carter leans one hand on Killian's chest, his other relaxes its grip on my hair. He rocks his hips on Killian, first going slow and tentative. The more he does it, the harder his cock is, the faster he pumps.

"That's it." Killian hikes me up to murmur to both of us. "Make me come, Carter. Harder. Fucking harder."

Killian pulls me back down. Sucking and licking my clit. Slipping a hand between us to push his fingers deep into my pussy. His abs flex from how hard he thrusts into Carter.

Ferocious. Ravenous. All-consuming.

Carter lets go of my hair altogether, curling his hand around the front of my neck. I arch my back, throwing my hands to Killian's chest. Carter's face hovers over me, swallowing my moans while Killian jerks our bodies from beneath us.

We continue for minutes or hours or eons. Time doesn't exist in this room. Nothing exists except us. Us, and the second orgasm that's about to rip out of me.

"I'm coming," I cry, my voice choked. "Fuck, I'm coming."

Killian takes me over the edge, sucking my clit, sinking his teeth. A scream ripples from my chest. He doesn't let me run from it, choking himself with my pussy by grabbing my hips and yanking me to his mouth.

His orgasm chases mine then. Killian sucks in air, his body stilling. Next comes his groan, his body pulsating beneath us. His orgasm shoots into Carter's ass, and Carter bites into his bottom lip. His fingers cover Killian's over my hips, holding onto me too, as he rides Killian hard twice more before Carter comes again. On my back.

"You're goddamn delicious, Amara." Killian helps me down, cradling me against his chest. His hand slips to my back, searching and then finding Carter's seed. "But I want to taste him too."

"Fuck, yes." I sense Carter's heat when he scoots up behind me. His arms envelop my middle, his sweaty, sexy chin resting on my shoulder.

Before Killian tastes Carter on his fingers, he turns to him. Looks him deep in the eye. "You did so well. Are you okay?"

Carter's silent. I twist to him, watching a hint of blush rising on his cheeks. "Never better."

We both watch as Killian dips his coated fingers into his wet lips. Our bodies drip. We both drip on Killian's chest and stomach, but he doesn't care. He cares about sucking on Carter's orgasm, and that's that. It's so beautifully obvious with how Killian's eyes glint.

"Too bad we have to go to work." Carter trails his lips on my neck, moving so I lie on my back. "I wasn't lying when I said I could do this for hours."

"Don't start." Killian perches his head on one hand, one of his eyebrows cocked. "I'll work with a hard-on for the rest of the day."

"Maybe we can take you to work, then." Carter nibbles on the crook of my neck while throwing an arm over Killian and me. "Move your flower shop into the hotel. Call you to our office every few hours. For serious, serious business meetings. Discuss more flower arrangements with you on your knees."

"I'll never be able to work with you two." My giggles have Killian's lips quirking. "I'm staying where I am."

"You sure?" Killian teases.

I don't mind that they don't really mean what they say. Carter won't let his personal life slip into Voltage. I bet Killian feels the same. They do want me there, and it's the thought that counts.

“Sweetest Amara,” Carter growls, and goosebumps light up my skin. “Let’s take you to shower before we head out?”

“What about taking a day off?” I turn from Killian to him. “Please?”

Ever since the wedding arrangement orders started piling up—we’ve delivered over ten weddings, and as of today, have more than twenty scheduled for the coming months—I decided to take the weekends off.

Most of the walk-ins head straight into Georgia’s pink, inviting shop anyway. Whatever. I don’t need walk-ins when I earn enough to have a decent life. Having a ton of money like my parents never interested me. Simple, happy life is what I crave. I can afford it now.

Carter and Killian must be able to do the same every once in a while. Like…today.

“I’m sorry, A. Wish we could.” His hand cups my cheek. From behind me, Killian closes in on us. His warm hand trailing circles on my waist. On Carter’s. “We need to be there. Set an example.”

“Yeah, I know.” My pout is unattractive. My pout is all I have. I don’t want any of us to leave this bed ever again. Definitely not so soon. “Maybe this one day? Just one?”

“You’ll have us later.” Killian runs his fingers through my matted hair. “Tonight.”

My breath catches in my throat.

“That’s him saying we’re in a relationship.” Carter hears my silent question, tipping my chin up to him. “The three of us. Together-together.”

“Don’t fuck with me,” I shriek, switching my gaze back and forth between the two men. “That easy?”

“I wish I could’ve given you easy, pet.” Carter rubs my belly. “Until we figure out what to say. How Killian hasn’t been grooming me to be his permanent fuck hole—”

“Always so vulgar,” Killian’s scold-mocks.

“I have your cum leaking out of my ass. I get a free pass to do anything.” Carter wags his eyebrows playfully. “Anyway, we have to lay low. For a little while longer.”

Carter and I have been laying low for half a year now. I understand why he’s like that in the hotel.

I’m a teeny tiny frustrated already. Especially when I have no idea how much longer *this* laying low is going to last.

I’m ready to fight my parents for this. They won’t accept us, and fuck them. I’m willing to cut ties with them once and for all to be with Carter and Killian. No one has a say in my life.

But…sigh. I’m also aware of how different their situation is. The rumors about this unconventional relationship. The possible damage to their reputation.

By people who don’t know us.

They need to make it seem genuine and organic. It makes sense.

I hate fucking waiting. “I get it. I’ll wait.”

“We don’t even know for sure that our dynamic will work out,” Killian, the voice of annoying logic, says. “There’s a time and place for everything.”

“We’ll make it work.” I cross my arms over my chest. At first, all I had for Killian was attraction. But the more I see of him, the more he talks and touches me, the more I want him. The surer I am of our bond, the three of us. “I’m not letting go.”

“She’s right. Our stubborn little thing. I’m not either.” To appease me, Carter presses a kiss to my wounded temple. “As much as it pains me to admit it, Killian’s right.”

“Brat.” Killian sighs at my side.

“We’ll take it one day at a time.” Carter pauses; his smile demonic. “We’ll be together more than before, though. I’ll stalk either of you to the ends of the world if you try to run. Or worse.”

“For some reason, I believe you.” There’s a hint of amusement in Killian’s voice before he reverts to being all business-like. “Amara, Carter and I talked while you were sleeping.”

“You have?” I shriek. “Oh, I’m too happy. Too fucking happy. You needed this time alone. Talk about feelings and stuff. Right? That’s what you talked about?”

Carter, already familiar with my excited screeching, chuckles.

Killian’s eyes widen. His surprise is momentary, though, because soon after, a slow, mini smile creeps on his lips. “Yes. We have. I brought up another thing. A hard limit. First, I want you to tell me yours.”

“I…”

“There’s no rush, beautiful girl.”

“Nothing’s final, either.”

My eyes tear up. They’re adorable—in their harsh, brow-furled kind of way—when they complete each other’s sentences.

“I don’t need to think. I have it.” I blink away the emotional tears, leveling each man with a serious gaze. “The three of us are in this together. We shouldn’t pair up.” I grab their hands, squeezing with everything I have in me. “Unless we all agree on it. Is that okay?”

Their thumbs stroke the inside of my wrist. I start hearing their inner communication. Wordlessly, they say they had the same thing in mind.

“We’ll continue this conversation this evening.” Killian releases my hand, but doesn’t move to get up. His fingers wrap around my neck. “Stay here until then, okay?”

“In the penthouse?” I frown. “Why?”

“You’re ours,” Carter growls.

“That’s supposed to be an answer?”

“Yes,” they answer simultaneously.

“Do I have a say in this?”

“No.” Carter bites my shoulder. He’s cute, even when he’s possessive as fuck.

“If you need to get out of the house for something, *anything*, call Carter or me and we’ll come to pick you up.” Killian offers me another one of his small smiles that makes me forget my annoyance. “Be your drivers for the weekend. How does that sound?”

“Sounds like I’ve been kidnapped.” They both smile now, and suddenly, being a prisoner in this ivory tower doesn’t sound terrible. “Okay. Fine.”

“Don’t let anyone in.” Carter’s voice is the most somber I’ve ever heard him. “For the off chance the guy who broke into your apartment followed us somehow.”

He’s worried. I’m not. The random burglar won’t bother with stalking me anymore. He’ll just find another person to attack.

Oh, fuck. I’ll be the one to blame for someone else getting hurt. Maybe even dying.

Then again, I didn’t file a complaint so the police wouldn’t lock Carter up for kicking the asshole’s ass.

When it comes to choosing between Carter and other people…I choose Carter. Every single time.

“I won’t open the door. No one comes in here no matter what.” I kiss the two men’s stubbled cheeks. “Swear.”

“Such a good girl,” both of them tell me.

Then they carry me to a long, hot shower.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

Amara

Carter and Killian went to work a couple of hours ago.

I'm where they ordered me to be. Curled up on one of their leather couches in their office, same place I've been hanging in ever since they left.

My damp hair drapes on the front of Carter's black T-shirt I'm wearing. It doesn't chill my skin, though. Impossible when Killian insisted I wear his beneath Carter's.

He claimed he wasn't sure it'd work between us. Silly man.

I bring both collars of their shirts to my nose, sniffing their distinctive, manly scents.

We'll work.

We will abso-fucking-lutely work.

Humming to myself, I flip another page in the hardbacks I picked off the men's bookshelves. An organized crime book. One of the dozens they have here. History books, criminal law books, autobiographies of New York's most famous mafia bosses—if it was ever written, I bet it's here. At least it seems like it by how huge their collection is.

This could be something to do with the shady crowd milling around the hotel. I recognized some politicians here and there. Then there are those with the hardened expressions. And those I've seen in the newspapers.

But what could it have to do with Carter's and Killian's taste in books?

Probably nothing. I shrug, continuing to read Bugsy Siegal's story. Truly interesting stuff. I'd have kept reading for hours, except I can't sit still

another second longer. I place the book back on the shelf where I found it and check the clock mounted on the wall.

Eleven a.m.

Too early for lunch. I unlock my phone, going through work emails.

Seed delivery to approve for next week. A signed contract for a wedding coming in three months. Opal asking whether I'm going to be on time on Monday morning.

Done. Done. Done.

In the silence of the huge penthouse, I've got nothing better to do than think.

My mind whirs to Carter and Killian. Drawn to them as if they were the honey to my hungry bee. My body heats and the memory. My skin is itchy with need.

They touched me. Ran their tongues on me. Kissed me. Kissed us.

We were together. We *are* together.

My God, I miss them.

Also, I hope Killian approves of me giving him a nickname. He has to.

I growl at my eagerness. My feet pace back and forth in the men's office as I try to wrench this idea from my head.

And failing.

Maybe Killie?

Too soon, Amara. Chill the fuck out.

My heart aches to hear their voices. I'm sure they could calm me down if they were here.

I could call them. That'd soothe my rattled soul for sure.

No.

They're working, and I've never been the clingy type. I have no plans on being one now.

Looking for something to do, I move my phone between my right and left hand.

My phone, that's right. I do have something to do.

Call my landlords aka my parents.

How I wish there were other available spaces I could move my shop to. Sadly, there aren't. I checked. Have been checking every now and again in case I get thrown out for no reason whatsoever. It's not the craziest idea.

I hope I'm wrong about them.

More than that, I hope they'll be okay with me subletting the apartment so I could use the money to help out around here. I don't care what Carter said. I want and should pitch in around here.

With a deep inhale, I dial my mother's number.

"Amara," she answers, underlying annoyance tainting her voice.

I ignore her disdain. I don't ask what's wrong this time. There's always something wrong when it comes to me.

"Hey, Mom." I rub the back of my neck, pacing the room again. "Got a minute?"

"You need money, don't you?" she whispers. She's exasperated. What's new? "I knew it. You and your silly florist dreams. It was only a matter of time before you failed."

Jesus, tell me how you really feel.

"Mom, Carnations is doing—"

"Case, come here a second, honey," she calls my dad, her voice dripping with sweetness. She's fake. So fake.

Judging by the chatter in the background, I'd say they're entertaining guests at their penthouse. That explains why she sounds extra nice. None of their acquaintances would ever learn what a disappointment I've turned out to be.

Unlike Melina, my older sister. The lawyer. The one who's about to make partner at one of the biggest criminal law firms in Manhattan.

I sink my teeth into my knuckles. The pain helps me snap out of my pity party. Fuck them. Fuck them right up their asses.

The sound of a heavy wooden door slamming is followed by my dad's voice. "What's going on, Elora?"

"It's *that* daughter."

"Hmph," he grumbles. "Yes, Amara?"

This isn't one of Killian's huffs. Dad's hatred and exasperation seep through the phone. There's no mistaking his annoyance. He's been that way toward me ever since I instructed our housekeeper to stop watering the plants around the penthouse and started taking care of them myself. Like I'm a disappointment.

I ignore him too.

I have my Daddies here.

A laugh escapes me at the thought of calling either of them that. Daddy one and Daddy two.

“What’s so funny?” The underlying warning in his voice shakes me through the phone.

“Nothing, sir.” I clear my throat.

“Money,” Mom whispers loud enough for me to hear.

“Is that it?” he parrots Mom’s accusation. “Or drugs? Maybe your business is failing? Maybe all of the above?”

“What?” It takes everything in me not to shout at him. That’s the fast track to getting them to refuse what I’m about to ask. “No. I’m not doing drugs.” *Unless you count Carter and Killian’s cum as one. Fucking addictive.* “And Carnations is doing just great.”

“What is it then?” Mom snaps. I should’ve guessed they’d put me on speakerphone. “This isn’t a social call, and we have guests waiting for us. The mayor’s daughter and her husband are here.”

More people who are so much more important than I am. Who you’d rather be around, I think but don’t verbalize. Trying to convince them to love me is a losing game. They haven’t invited me over to their home in an eternity. They won’t start anytime soon.

Besides, it’s not their affection I’m after. Solving my rent problem is.

“I need you to sign off on something. I’m going to put up the apartment on Airbnb for a month or two.” Since I’m not interested in having a repeat of this conversation, I clarify, “Maybe longer. I haven’t decided yet.”

Silence. They’ve either muted the call or I’ve shocked them into silence.

“Absolutely not,” Dad thunders eventually.

I imagine his gray eyes glittering. His thin, brown eyebrows pinched together. His anger exploding from him, turning him into an ugly, ugly man.

“Will you hear me out?” I still try. And crash and burn.

“You’re supposed to prove to us you’re a responsible adult.” He seethes. “Look after the shop instead of going on months-long vacations.”

The impulse to answer him stands on the tip of my tongue. I itch to throw back in his face how other than weekends, I haven’t taken a day off in the last four years. That if I *did* plan a long vacation, I’d be fucking entitled to have one.

Carter and Killian’s faces appear before my eyes. Carter would’ve sneered at my father, might’ve punched his throat. Killian would’ve huffed right back in his face. Would’ve made him feel small and pathetic.

They wouldn’t have begged him to understand. Wouldn’t have appealed to his compassionate side. They wouldn’t have given my dad the

explanations he’s not worthy of.

I’m equally strong as they are. I stood up to a fucking burglar. I can handle my father.

“I’m not going on vacation. I’m, uh… making some changes.” I lift my chin in the empty study. “What’s wrong with having a *paying* tenant fill in for me? Just until I figure this out.”

“Amara Grace Carmichael, you’ve never known when to give up,” my mother interrupts. “Always pushing. Taking advantage of our kindness.”

Shit. She uses *the* tone. The *I’m so fucking done with you* tone.

They’re threatening Carnations. I hear it. I smell through the phone.

They can’t kick me out, though. Right? I pay on time. I’m a dutiful tenant. They’re legally bound to let me stay. They have to.

“What the fuck does it mean?” I inwardly curse myself for snapping. For exposing my weakness.

“That does it,” Dad booms. “You just crossed the last line, Amara.”

My lip curls. I’m so pissed that I’m choking on my words. Scratching at my throat.

“That’s it, Amara?” Here comes the gloating. How he loves that. “Got nothing clever to say?”

The beautiful, sunny day outside does nothing to calm my nerves. Being sore doesn’t do a damn thing to help alleviate my mood.

My parents are about to fuck me over. I’m not going to lie here and let them kick me while I’m down.

“I do have something to say.” I know what’s about to leave my mouth will make them mock me. Fuck it. It’s the truth. “My flowers are nicer than you two ever were.”

“I should’ve gotten my tubes tied up after Melina,” Mom murmurs.

Her words shouldn’t hurt. After so many years of being told I’m less than my sister, I should be used to it.

But they hurt. They hurt a whole fucking lot.

My parents have said a lot of things in the past. Never that. Never actually wishing I wasn’t even born.

“We’re putting the building up for sale.” My father delivers another blow to my already bruised heart. “We’ll find buyers soon. Then you’re free to go on your vacation. Indefinitely. We’re done caring what happens to you, you hear?”

My flowers. My beautiful plants.

“No.” I collapse to the floor, grasping the desk so I won’t crash.

“Yes.” He’s evil. Cold.

“You can’t,” I counter, stronger this time. “We signed a lease. It’s not up for another…”

Air leaves my lungs when I calculate the dates. Blood drains from my face.

“Two weeks,” Dad completes my sentence, triumphant. Donating sperm apparently gives him the right to treat me like shit. “Two weeks and you’re out. Even if we don’t have a buyer, we’re evacuating you. Use this time to consider your vacations and your future, Amara. You’re on your own from here on out.”

“Please, Dad—”

“This conversation is over. You have our lawyer’s contact number. Reach out to him for anything you might need that relates to the shop. Goodbye.”

Dad hangs up.

He fucking hangs up on me.

My pulse slows. I don’t think I can breathe or even live for five minutes. At least.

When I come to, I jump to my feet, sprinting to the closet.

My parents hate me. They hate how eccentric I am. How I’ve been an embarrassment for years, according to them. How I’ve never towed the line.

They think I’m alone. Hell, they want me to be alone.

I am not.

I have two men to hug me. Offer warmth. Support. Affirmations.

My parents won’t win.

I. Am. Not. Alone.

I have to be smart about this. I can’t show up at the hotel wearing the owners’ clothes. There’ll be time for that, it just won’t be today. Sniffing their shirts one last time, I discard them and opt for an outfit that could pass as my work clothes. I choose a long yellow maxi dress with Bengal clock vine print and black high-top sneakers.

Before I storm out of the apartment, I grab one of the lily vases in the foyer. An excuse to stop by Voltage.

Panic bubbles in my chest, and I still try to abide by Killian and Carter’s rules. Sort of.

I wasn’t supposed to leave, but I have to.

Still, no one will know we’re in a relationship. I’ll make sure of that.

As I ride down the elevator, I let that sink in. How these two men have settled into my heart. Earned my respect. Made me love them more than I've ever loved my own parents.

They're my people. With them, I'll sort out my jumbled brain. I'll be fine.

I have to.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

Carter

"Cut it out." Killian points at the knife I flip repeatedly in my hand.

"Why?" I pretend to file my nails with the knife's blade, placing an ankle over my knee. "Jealous of Cyclone?"

Our second and last meeting ended ten minutes ago. We vetted two new dirty politicians as members, explained the rules thoroughly, and now we're done.

No big drama today.

Other than the one going on in my head. Where I have two certain people naked in every position possible.

On me. Under me. In and sheathing me.

Fuck.

"Should I be?" Killian who sits at my side cocks his head.

Neither of us sits behind the desk during our meetings. Appearances are everything. We're equals, and everyone should treat us as such.

"Nah. If anything, *I* should be jealous." I slip the blade back in, sliding it into my pocket. "I have plans for Amara. Blood play. Something kinky. Something that'll make me wish my teeth could be sharp enough to get the job done. Cyclone's going to have so much fun."

Unphased by my depravity, Killian unbuttons his suit jacket. He eyes me curiously

His amusement is short-lived, though. "Speaking of your girl…"

"Our," I correct. I'm his and hers, blah, blah, blah. It's sentimental crap, but it has to be said.

“Our.” A flash of possessiveness flares in Killian’s eyes.

“Yes. About Amara.” I scratch my stubbled cheek. “What’s up? Wanna know if she fakes her orgasms? The answer is no. Never.”

Killian licks the upper row of his teeth. “How can you be so sure?”

“I am.”

“Maybe she’s a really good actress.” He doesn’t mean it.

Still, his taunting has me snapping out of my laid-back position.

“She might be a good actress. After all, she’s good at everything she does.” My foot drops to the floor, both hands on my knees as I lean into his face. The scent of his aftershave turns me right the fuck on. “But her pussy isn’t.”

Silence. A challenge.

“You know what? Let’s call her and ask.”

“Carter.” He grabs my chin, ensnaring my gaze in his. “You’re not allowed to mention her orgasms, yours, or mine while we’re alone. I can’t get hard at work.”

“Is that an order?” I speak inches from his face. Baiting him. “*Dad*?”

“*Step*. On second thought, we should call Amara. I imagine she’d give me permission to spank your ass raw for that last bit.” His eyes narrow. “With or without her being present.”

“Do it, then.”

I’m hard, my cock straining against my pants. I don’t wait for Killian to respond, fishing my phone out and dialing Amara’s number. Once it starts ringing, my eyes don’t leave Kill’s.

His nostrils flare. “Phone sex.”

“Yeah.” The phone rings. “We both get to tell Amara what to do. How to come. With our pants off.”

We wait until it goes to voicemail.

“Weird.” I frown, breaking eye contact. The CCTV app doesn’t show her anywhere around the penthouse. She’s not in the shop, either.

“She would’ve called to let us know if she left the house.” Killian releases me, sitting back. “She’s probably in the bathroom. Don’t worry.”

“You’re right.” His calm demeanor soothes my frayed nerves. “Next time we leave the house, I’m putting a tracker on her.”

Killian quirks an eyebrow, giving me that *you’re being crazier than usual* look. When I shrug, he schools his features.

“About the man who broke into her apartment. Chuck.” Killian cuts to the question he’s been meaning to ask from the get-go. Showing me that he, too, is crazy about her. Obsessed with keeping her safe. “Any news?”

“No. I’ll text them again.” Same as I have whenever I fucking could.

This time, however, they beat me to it. A notification flashes on the screen of my phone.

“Fucking finally.” Impatience takes over and I unlock the phone. “So Chuck worked on his own. No money trail. No calls to anyone but his mother. He was a nobody. A stalking thieving, probably-rapist nobody.”

“Great news.” While the tension leaves Killian’s shoulders, I’m on edge all over again.

I grit my teeth, my blood burning in my veins. The memory of her unconscious and moments from being raped turns me into a murderous beast. I feel like bringing Chuck back from the dead just so I could murder him a second time.

Slow and painful.

One patch of skin after the other.

Glue them to a trophy and hand it over to Amara.

Or not. It’d send her screaming from me.

“We’re leaving the cameras we installed in her shop where they are.” Killian cuts into my homicidal train of thought. “That doesn’t change. Someone else might try and get to her in a month. A week. A goddamn year. They stay.”

Minor detail, those cameras. We installed them without her knowledge. Our guy scoped the shop when A was here—we called him the minute she left. He then returned the same night to finish the job. We have eyes on her twenty-four/seven.

It’s a necessity. It’s also hot. So fucking hot to be able to stalk her everywhere. Our lives are going to get that much more interesting. I would’ve opened the CCTV app in the penthouse to see what she’s doing, but I think Killian’s talking to me.

“Carter.”

Yeah, definitely talking to me. “Yes?”

“I said, we’re leaving the cameras in her shop.”

“Yes.” I nod. “Can’t be too careful.”

Killian’s quiet. No. Not quiet. He’s giving me that other look now. That *cut the crap* look.

Yesterday, he was willing to give me a month to come clean to Amara. Guess he's lost his patience.

I straighten my spine, preparing to defend myself when three raps on the door interrupt my monologue. The one I've repeated in my head for the past six months.

"Killian? Carter?" Luna's voice comes over the walkie talkie.

"Come in," Killian answers, his head whipping to the door.

Luna enters the room. Her raven-black long hair is straight and parted down the middle. The black eyeliner outlines her blue eyes. The black pencil skirt and black jacket that make for her concierge outfit are flawless.

Everything's as it should be.

Except for her hands. Luna wrings her hands. She hardly ever does that. She's confident. Handles the crap our members do if Killian and I are busy.

Unless…

Unless they get violent.

I'm on my feet in a matter of seconds. "What's wrong?"

My muscles strain. Adrenaline pumps through my veins.

Whoever this asshole is, thank you. For the past five minutes, I've been anxious to bash someone's head in. Since Chuck's preoccupied with being dead and all.

Killian moves to stand at my side. Communicates silently to chill the fuck out without Luna noticing our exchange.

"Your next meeting. A certain member is upsetting them."

"Who?" I bark, since we don't have a next meeting. Whoever's doing the upsetting is doing it to another member. The latter's identity doesn't matter. The culprit's is.

"Christopher Boroughs." Luna's dark eyebrows pinch. "Our security just left for their bathroom break and Christopher's started being an asshole. I would've said something to separate them, but he scared me. He scared all of us. There's something off about him this afternoon, more than usual. I came here as fast as I could. I didn't want to wait. Your meeting didn't seem to mind."

Metaphorically, I'm already out the door. My fingers wrapped around Christopher's collar, dragging him downstairs. Making him bleed.

Except it's *this* again. "Wait. What next meeting?"

"There is no next meeting." Killian bristles.

"I know, she said she had to see you, and—"

A current of electricity crosses between Killian and me. An understanding followed by a primal need to protect what's ours.

"She?" we ask simultaneously.

"The cute flower girl. Amara."

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CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

Carter

"You know who I'm talking about, right?"

As if either of us could ever forget her.

Luna's questioning voice should comfort me. She has no idea I've been screwing the cute flower girl for the past six months. Relentlessly.

But, no. I'm nowhere near being comforted.

"Thank you, Luna, for coming here." Mr. Responsible at my side manages to stay put despite his emotions varying between rage and urgency. Mine sure fucking do. "We'll take it from here."

Killian sidesteps Luna toward the open door. Me? My psycho, overprotective ass is already in the hallway.

Sure, a few words won't hurt our strong woman. She won't be physically hurt, either. Won't be raped in the bar of our hotel. Nothing like that.

Our bartender packs a Glock on him just in case. Everyone knows he does.

It doesn't comfort me. He could be hiding an RPG under the counter.

The fact is fucking Christopher is harassing Amara. And no one—not a single fucking one—messes with what's ours.

We have to protect her. We have to be smart about it. Through the cloud of rage, I realize it has to be done without anyone actually catching wind that she's ours.

One motherfucking step at a time.

Until then.

Save her. Take her away from here.

Murder Christopher.

“He’s acting out because of Preston.” Killian’s two steps behind me, alone in the hallway.

“Fuck him.” I glance over my shoulder, watching him catching up. “I don’t care that he’s a hitman. Don’t give a shit that Preston was his accountant. Rules are rules. And now this? Amara?”

Killian’s stern expression gives me my answer. I’m right to be losing my shit.

I charge forward, faster than before. My shoes can’t eat up the distance to Amara fast enough. A fucking lifetime, that’s what it feels like to get to her.

Adrenaline pumps through my veins, making me hear, see, and smell everything. My hand clutches my trustworthy Cyclone, both of us eager to slice into the man who got close to Amara.

Up until today, Killian and I haven’t administered punishments in public. Never disrupting the careful balance we maintain in our hotel.

That’s about to change. Goddamn Christopher Boroughs. If he so much as breathed a wrong word to her, I’ll demolish him.

No. One. Fucks. With. Amara.

I screech to a halt at the entrance to the hotel’s bar. Killian stops right at my side.

Searching for her for one second. Mesmerized by her the next.

Our blond beauty in a yellow dress is a beacon of light in our dimly lit hotel. As always. She occupies one of the black leather high stools at the black and gold marble bar, snarling.

Fucking snarling.

With her arms hugging the black vase with purple lilies I recognize from our penthouse, she snarls at Christopher. One of the most feared hitmen on the East Coast. Her lips are curled in disgust a moment longer, then she turns to Jamey, our bartender.

She’s ignoring Christopher while he’s yapping in her ear and while his hand rises to her hair.

Pride swells in my heart. Rage is quick to follow.

“Rule number two,” I hiss, hearing Kill’s shoes on the marble floor less than a foot beside me. “We’re entitled to hurt him.”

We’re on the move.

“What do you say, then? Come over to my loft? This bouquet is wasted in this place.” His repulsive fingers grab one of *our* lilies, tucking it behind her

ear. I hear Killian growl. Or maybe it's me. "It'll look so much better in my bedroom. So will you."

"Never." Amara spins to glare at him, swatting his hand off as if he's a pesky bug. Just as fast, her eyes return to Jamey.

She won't have to fend for herself much longer.

Jamey slides his hand under his suit jacket to his holster.

Ten steps.

Ten, long motherfucking steps.

"On second thought, what are you even doing here in the first place? These flowers don't match this hotel. And you're here on a weekend." He studies her annoyed profile. Cyclone burns hot in my palm. "You're here to fuck one of the owners, aren't you? Which is it? The dad or the son?"

"Miss Carmichael." Killian and I come to a halt behind Amara and Christopher's stools. His eyes are hot on Amara. "You're here for us, I believe. And these are the flowers we asked you to bring over."

"Christopher," I address him, placing my hand possessively on her shoulder. Showing everyone she's important to us. As our supplier, of course. "I hope you're not doing what I think you're doing."

"Nice of you to join us." His pale blue eyes are mad and violent. His smile sickens me. "Carter. Killian."

"I'm always here." I flash him my psycho smile that doesn't reach my eyes. "Always. And I hate—fucking *loathe*—it when our members break our rules."

"Well, what can I say? She's been asking for it." He shrugs. "Playing hard to get. A needy bitch like the rest of them."

God himself couldn't stop me now. I leave Amara's side. One of my hands curls viciously around Christopher's throat. He barely has a chance to lift his hands to fend me off when my other hand makes a fist around his cornflower blue tie. And yanks on it.

"Mr. Steele, Mr. Murdock." Amara's voice is sheer happiness. Glee, even, despite the way Christopher chokes in my hold. "I brought over the lilies you asked for."

My gaze flicks behind me. Zoning in on her smiling face. Genuine joy pours from her.

The sight gives me a glimmer of hope. She might accept us. The nature of our business. The things we do.

Christopher fights me, but I'm hardly done watching Amara. Another emotion appears in her eyes. I need another second to study her, so Christopher will have to be subdued in the meantime. I kick away the stool he's sitting on, twist his tie to his back, and hold the shorter man like a dog on a leash.

"Carter," he chokes out.

Our Amara is sad. That's what I couldn't figure out.

The guy I'm choking isn't responsible for it. He annoyed her. Made me want to burn his face with acid. But he didn't put the hopeless look in her eyes.

Meaning we have more people to punish.

Right after this jerk has burn marks the shape of his tie around his neck.

The gaze I give her should tell her I have her. Killian's hand on her bicep reassures me nothing will happen to her while I take care of this filth.

"We're taking this to our office." Killian's words drip with venom. Of unspoken threats.

He's hot and seething like I am. The composed version of my uncontained rage. Killian's doing one of the things he does best.

Damage control.

Dozens of eyes watch our every move in the bar area. Members in the leather couches spread around. They've quieted, no longer murmuring. No longer planning and scheming.

The rational thing to do would be to avoid a scene, like Killian suggested.

I don't remember the last time I've ever been anything remotely close to rational.

Christopher is about to be reminded of our rules. About to realize what we do to people who get too close to our people.

Not just him, though, I decide.

All of them are.

"To the office?" Christopher is a head shorter than I am. I see his smirk from my place above him. Repulsive. "Where the three of us can tag team your little whore?"

In one swift movement, I release his tie, grip his platinum blond hair by the roots, and lift his head.

"Tag team, huh?"

Crack.

His head creates the most beautiful symphony when his forehead bashes into the marble bar.

“Little whore?”

Crack. Crack. Crack.

A few shocked gasps echo in the otherwise dead silence of the bar. These assholes have seen and done worse. But this *is* the first time I’ve beat someone up with an audience.

Enjoy the show.

“Sit your fucking ass down,” Killian thunders at someone behind me. “You do not want me to come over there.”

“You even think about tag teaming her…” I raise Christopher’s head by the roots of his hair, smashing his forehead back down. *Crack.* “I’ll fuck you up, Christopher. Fuck you up so bad that bashing your head in is going to look like child’s play in comparison. In fact, I doubt anyone will recognize you once I’m done.”

His jaw tics. His eyes squint through the blood trickling down from his forehead.

I swear I hear Amara giggle. A small sound. An adorable sound. Her happiness makes everything worthwhile. Her safety even more so.

Our members will have to be crazy to even look at her after today.

Now, my smile isn’t a tool to freak Christopher the fuck out.

It’s genuine.

Another glimpse at Amara fills me with joy. There’s no mistaking the twinkle in her eyes. The earlier sadness I saw on her face has diminished. Her giddy energy at the violence brims through her pores.

Kinky little thing.

I know what Killian will have to say about that. That she can handle everything.

I’d beg to differ. There’s a huge difference between hurting someone and killing them in—sometimes—very creative ways.

Anyway.

Back to the asshole I go. I growl in his ear, “I dare you to call her a little whore one more time.” The way I’m holding him isn’t cutting it for me. I dip a finger into his bleeding forehead. Painting the rest of the skin up there in red.

Then I shove my finger into his ear.

My finger is far too thick to rupture his eardrum. But we both know I'm psycho enough to try.

Christopher grunts. Does his best to wrangle himself out of my grip.

"Next time you call her by any fucking name, I'll sew your mouth shut. Personally." My top lip curls in a snarl. I mash his cheek to the cool marble, the wrath on my face filling his view. "Won't lose sleep over it, either."

From the corner of my eye, I notice Amara doesn't flinch. I think the pieces start clicking into place for her. Or she might be okay because she thinks I'm issuing empty threats.

That I'd never be this cruel.

I was. I am. I motherfucking will.

One of these days—soon—I'll open up. Tell her what monstrosities Killian and I are capable of. Soon.

"Aww, so I was right. She is your girlfriend."

Brave motherfucker. On any other day, I'd admire this quality. Today, Christopher's doing the unforgivable. Going after Amara. Taunting me with an underlying threat.

"You broke the rules," I say loud enough for the people in the lobby to hear.

I can't bring myself to lie. Can't utter the words *she's not mine*.

She fucking is.

"No hurting anyone here."

"As mentioned, I didn't break—"

Fucking hitmen and their overconfidence. So full of themselves after ending the lives of dozens of people. Invincible, even.

He might be. Anywhere else but here.

"Harassment means hurting someone. Besides, this isn't about her. This is about you, Chrissy Pooh." The corners of my lips tick higher. My voice is that of a mother babying her child. "What happened? You butthurt that we kicked out your precious accountant? That's why you're throwing a tantrum? Little baby can't handle the real world?"

I'm calculated when I deliver my speech. Mad, but calculated. Keeping my secrets from Amara close to my chest. She knows this is an exclusive, members-only hotel. For rich people. The NDA she signed when we first hired her stated as much. I bet she recognizes some of their ugly mugs from the news.

The rest she'll hear about soon.

“Tantrum, my ass.” His smugness vanishes off his pretty boy face. At thirty-five, he looks younger than I am. “I’m here to get justice. You two were wrong to revoke his membership. Admit it.”

“You’re telling us how to run our hotel, Boroughs?” Killian materializes at Christopher’s other side, yanking on his tie from beneath him. Mashing his face harder into the bar.

Guess he’s had enough of Christopher’s bullshit. That, coupled with Amara being safe and sound, means it’s time for him to join the fun.

“No.” Christopher swallows, his fingers pushing against the bar. We don’t let up an inch. “I’m telling you Preston made one mistake. He deserves a second—”

“He deserves jack shit.” Killian’s gruff voice sends ice racing down my spine. Christopher must be freaking terrified.

It shouldn’t make me hard.

It fucking does.

“Same goes for the rest of you.” Killian raises his voice, looking around the bar-restaurant area.

Every eye in the room lands on him. Wide and terrified. Other than Amara’s. The look on her matches my excitement. That does it. Her pussy is the hole I want to sink into.

While I punish her for leaving the penthouse without calling us first.

For risking her life.

“One strike and you’re out,” Killian continues.

It’s clear to everyone what *out* could mean.

Everyone but Amara.

Preston got off with a slap on the wrist. There were others, though. Others who are swimming at the bottom of the Hudson River.

The crowd in the bar area nods.

Christopher mumbles begrudgingly, “Yes, Killian.”

“And now the final act.” I move away so Amara, the woman I love with every fiber of my being, can see Christopher’s punishment.

Her chocolate brown eyes stare at us. Her slender arms wrap around the vase she brought along. I’m willing to bet she’s pretending it’s either me or Killian.

Christopher’s Adam’s apple bobs when I put all my weight on his face. “Tell her how sorry you are.”

“I’m sorry,” he blurts out his fake apology.

“Her name is *Amara*,” Killian deadpans. “Say, *I’m sorry, Amara*. Make it believable, or I’ll make it hurt. Those are your only two options.”

Amara’s gaze flickers to Killian. She has hearts in her eyes. Gratitude.

Her eyes take away some of our doubts. Would you look at her. Excited about the prospect of violence.

Killing a person isn’t beating them up, but she’ll get there. She’ll get used to us. Yes, she will.

“I’m sorry, Amara.” His apology sounds genuine. Sort of.

Good fucking dog.

Next in line, Amara and Killian. My dick is begging to be touched. My palm tingles with the desire to spank and punish our girl. My teeth ache to bite into her exposed skin and my tongue to swipe Killian’s length.

The blood and brutality have reduced me to the sum of my needs.

“Don’t come back here.” I throw him to the floor. Where the trash belongs.

He collapses on his hands and knees. Bleeding from his forehead.

No one dares to rise from their chair or offer him help.

The only person I hear talking is Luna who is calling housekeeping over the radio.

“You wanted to see us?” Killian outstretches his hand to Amara, helping her off the stool as if Christopher isn’t coughing like a mad man on the floor.

“You asked for this vase, and I brought it.” She stands tall, though her voice is timid. I don’t like it. And this sadness again. “Is this a bad time? I can come back later.”

This isn’t like my pet. She’s rattled, and I need to find out why. By the determined look in Killian’s eyes, he shares the sentiment.

“Couldn’t be a better time, Miss Carmichael.” I flank Amara at the other side, placing a hand on the small of her back. “We were waiting for you. To discuss you and your shop.”

She grimaces.

Oh, fuck no.

Something’s definitely up.

Be it a client or her parents, someone is going to pay for doing this to her.

It’s a promise.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

Amara

As soon as the door shuts behind the three of us in the office, someone winds his fist in my hair.

"Hands on the wall." Carter tugs on my locks, his voice gruff in my ear.

Killian takes the vase from my hands, placing it somewhere behind us.

Carter's teeth are on my neck. "You're making me wait, A."

A thrill courses through my body. My toes tingle.

My heart, however, that asshole still feels. Still hurts. Reminding me of why I rushed over here.

When I don't do as he says, Carter yanks at my hair harder. Killian's firm hand sneaks up to my throat from my side.

"Muffin." I gaze into Carter's eyes as mine start to water.

"Begging won't work today, pet." He shoves me to the wall, pressing my cheek against it. "Not now. Not after you came here without calling us first. Not after nearly giving me a heart attack."

"Carter." His name on my lips is a plea for him to continue.

I thought I wanted to talk. I don't. I just want to be touched. Groped. Hurt by these two strong men.

Have the pain pummel through the thoughts of my grim future.

Neither Carter nor Killian listen to my silent plea.

They move in tandem as they manhandle me. Carter steps to my side. Killian wrenches down my underwear, grips my hips, and hauls me to his front. My ass is pressed to his hard cock. My hands are being forced to the wall by Carter.

“You have no idea how worried we were.” Killian grabs a fistful of the skirt of my dress, shoving the soft material up my waist.

After the violence I witnessed at the bar, I should be scared of them. Of the rage they exuded. I should run for the hills, scream for help.

I won’t.

I’m desperate for more. For everything they can give me.

Because they’re not mad at me for being here. Aren’t ashamed of me.

They care.

My sexy, feral forces of nature. Their cruelty has been a surge of love and life, mending my broken heart. The way they defended was a beacon of light to the darkness that almost swallowed me whole.

I don’t care that they’re a little too aggressive to be hotel managers.

More. More. More.

I need more.

“You shouldn’t have.” Twisting my head, I gaze at them. “There was a knife at the bar. I could’ve stabbed him.”

Violence and brutality pour from their eyes. Sex, too.

And love. They *so* love me.

“I’m sure you would’ve.” Carter pinches my ass hard enough that I scream. “How’d you get here, though?”

“Uber,” I whisper, trying to say the word without twisting my lips.

Carter and Killian exchange a glance.

A moment later, two large hands strike each cheek of my ass. Hard enough that I scream and try to squirm away from them.

“Scream all you like.” One side of my ass is mauled, squeezed, and abused by Carter. “The office is soundproofed.”

I whimper, the sting of his abuse burning my ass.

Killian shrugs off his jacket and drops it on the floor. His eyes don’t leave mine when he rolls the sleeves of his shirt up his muscular forearms. Once done, he takes me from Carter so he can remove his jacket as well.

“We, on the other hand, will hear you.” Carter, my sadistic lover, winks. Pleased as fucking punch. “Every scream. Every cry for mercy. It’ll be ours. A payment for your little stunt today.”

“Unless,” Killian starts, his index finger trailing up and down my crack. “You tell us what happened. Give us the name of the person who hurt you. We’ll hurt them instead.”

How do they know? I gave Christopher attitude. Smiled at them. Did everything to hide the pain in my heart.

“We’ll hurt them good, A,” Carter drawls. “Maybe even worse than what Christopher got. Depends on how badly they wronged you.”

“You plan on doing to them what you’re doing to me now?” Jealousy bubbles inside me at the notion, eviscerating my doubts. They’re mine. “You’d fuck them?”

Carter’s hand connects to my wounded ass cheek. *Smack.*

“Hell, no.”

“Well, Amara?” Quirking an eyebrow, Killian nudges his finger to my tighter hole. “Names.”

The thought of the two of them leaving me or pitying me is infuriating. Plus, I really don’t feel like talking about my parents and losing my shop.

I need my men’s cruelty. Their rough touches. For the three of us to get lost in each other.

Anything else won’t do.

“No.” I pinch my lips. “No one’s hurt me.”

“Liar,” Carter says affectionately, lifting his palm and—

Smack. Smack. Smack.

“Leave my ass alone,” I squeal, wiggling. Fighting them for the sake of fighting.

Then the adrenaline gives me an advantage over both men and I’m being torn from their grip.

I make it two steps to my left when a large, muscular arm hooks around my middle. Dragging me back to them.

“You’re staying right here, beautiful girl.” Killian shoves my dress up again. His palm connects to my ass one, two, three times. “That’s for running. And for not answering us.”

Carter grabs my waist while Killian pushes me into the wall. He hikes my ass up in the air, and Carter helps him to hold me in place while Killian whacks my ass another three times.

This. This is what I needed.

I still cry out. It hurts so good that tears of relief stream down my cheeks.

“We handled Christopher for you.” Another slap from Killian. This time to my pussy. “But you came here for another reason.”

“You didn’t drive up here in a freaking Uber to get punished.” Carter flips his palm, spanking my pussy too. Sending painful, delicious pain through

me. Pain that makes me forget. “Something happened. You’re going to tell us what it is, or we’re going to torture it out of you. Either way, we’re finding out.”

I have another go at wiggling away from his hold. I get absolutely nowhere.

“You’re ours, pet.” His tongue laps at the top of my ass crack, and I jump on my toes. Ignoring me, he twists his head and bites the flesh of my ass. “We take care of what’s ours.”

Looking back at them hurts my neck, but I can’t stop. Two powerful men in their black suits. Broad frames. Fierce eyes.

Both of them spanking and tormenting me in turns.

“We’re listening.” Carter stands up straight.

My body tingles, the anticipation burning my skin.

Killian tilts his head. His stepson mirrors his posture. They’re not just looking at me. They see through me. Into my soul. Slowly, leisurely, their gazes move lower. Between my legs.

“Drenched.” Carter trails two fingers along my inner thigh. He dips them into his mouth, sucking on my arousal. “So sweet, our beautiful little slut.”

“Is she now?” Killian taunts. He grips Carter’s chin, pressing their mouths together, slipping his tongue into Carter’s mouth. Tasting me on him.

A moan escapes me, my thighs clenching. These two are beyond beautiful together.

“Yes, she is.” Killian breaks the kiss, returning his attention to me. “I would’ve licked every drop from your pretty little cunt, Amara. Would’ve taken turns with Carter. But you still haven’t told us who hurt you.”

No words come out of my mouth. I can’t cry.

If I do, they’ll see. They’ll see the pain that poisons me. How it hurts to have heard what my parents said to me. How I’m going to lose my shop.

No. No. No.

“Staying silent, I see.” Carter drags the pads of his fingers back and forth over my slit.

I growl, raging at the infuriating tease.

“Behave.”

Carter doesn’t wait for me to control myself. He slaps my pussy. More animalistic sounds rush out my throat when Carter teases my clit, tender and completely unsatisfying.

“We’ll edge you for hours, A.” Carter taps my clit, torturing me. “Us. The only two people who are allowed to hurt you. The two people who’ll always be there to protect you.”

Killian raises his palm a few inches above my ass. Taunting me.

“Break me.” I seethe. “Do it.”

“You’d rather have your ass whipped, pinched, and bitten?” Killian’s eyebrow hikes up. “Be denied an orgasm for hours? Maybe days? Is that what you’re telling us?”

“Yes.” Anything better than my emotional pain. “Make me fucking bleed. Make me beg for relief. Fuck in my face while I’m shackled and crying with the need to join you. Do. It. Already.”

“Sure about that?” Killian squeezes a fleshy part of my ass. When I clench my teeth and give them nothing, he joins Carter. They’re taking turns on me. “We’re not fucking around, Amara. We’ll keep it up until you talk to us.”

The pain they inflict doesn’t do what I need it to anymore. Instead, it brings the memories high up to the surface. Where I don’t want it. Where it hurts.

My soul cracks, the agony rushes out of me in the form of tears. Of sobs.

“Whatever you do, it’ll hurt less. So, go on,” I beg through the tears. “Have at it. I fucking want you to.”

They exchange a serious look. Killian returns to study me first. “We’ll get you through it, beautiful girl.”

“Begonias, Amara. Remember begonias,” Carter reminds me of my safeword. “Say it for us. Let us see you remember.”

“Begonias,” I whisper.

The world stills for the whole of a second before Carter smacks my ass. The blow is so hard that he sends me to Killian. I’m howling in pain.

The best kind of pain.

Killian doesn’t give me pause. Doesn’t soften the next blow, either.

They take turns on my ass. Burning me. Marking me. Delivering pain that’s too much. That isn’t enough.

They continue saying nothing for what seems like hours. Grunting with effort. Stopping every few minutes to check if I’m about to say my safeword.

I never do.

I never will.

I need this.

They go on until the skin on my ass feels raw and wounded.

Until my heart bursts open. More tears come, more furious than ever. A flood soaking through my cheeks and down to the floor.

The physical pain doesn't bother me. It's my emotions that rise to the surface, making a mess of everything.

My chest heaves. I hiccup. Sob.

"Beautiful girl."

"Pet."

Their voices are grunts. They filter into my ears. Their strong arms, one from each side, hook under my belly. They're warm. They're loving. They're them.

I'm being hauled into one firm chest and one arm releases me.

A hand winds in my hair, angling my face to the side. To meet the beautiful man with gray, stormy eyes. Sweat beads have formed on his forehead. Fire burns from his every pore.

"Amara, I can't fucking take another second of this." He yanks my hair harder, his other hand going to my throat. "Tell us right the fuck now what happened, or so help me…"

"They're selling my shop. I won't have any place for my flowers. For my plants." My gaze darts hysterically between him and Killian. "It'll be months before I find a new place, and they'll sell the shop by then. I won't have anywhere to keep my plants. Won't be able to sell anything. They ruin everything. It hurts, Carter. It hurts so goddamn much."

Carter pins me to his chest. My hands ball into fists, but I need them. I need to hold onto something. Someone. Killian sees through my crumpled face, grabs both my wrists, and brings my hands to the place where his heart beats.

"They said they wished I'd never been born," I mumble, leaning my weight on Carter. His lips don't leave the top of my head. They're tender. The violence he radiates isn't. "Fuck, it hurts so fucking bad. Why did you make me talk about them? Why?"

I do, in fact, know why. It's the same reason I fled from their penthouse and showed my face here. To have them love me. Take care of me. Tell me I'm not alone.

But fuck, the pain. It's shredding me. Now that I've said the words, my grim future is real. So real.

“Her landlords? Why the fuck would they say that?” Killian asks Carter, probably realizing I’m too much of an emotional mess to elaborate.

Carter has kept my landlords’ identity to himself. He hasn’t gossiped.

“Carter.” More tears streak my cheeks while my chest inflates and deflates with soft sobs. And through it all, I smile.

Carter doesn’t share the sentiment. His jaw tics and his teeth make an awful gnashing sound.

“Of course Killian doesn’t know, A.” He loosens the hold on my hair, stroking it lovingly. “Your story is yours to share. Only yours.”

“It’s embarrassing.” It is, it really is. This outburst, my relationship with my parents. This whole day. “I shouldn’t have come.”

“Let me tell you what you shouldn’t have done.” Killian squeezes my wrists. “Stayed alone. You’re not alone. You did the right thing. Even if you endangered yourself and rode in an Uber. This is where you belong. With us.”

“Thank you.” My tears dry slowly. My heart, though, bleeds for these two men.

“Go on, Amara.” Killian’s brows furrow. “I’m listening.”

“My landlords are my parents.” My fingernails scratch his shirt repeatedly, my mouth scrunching. “They hated it when I talked to flowers. They hated that I didn’t pay attention in class. That I got in trouble in school, even though I was the one being bullied. I wouldn’t—couldn’t—be the perfect little girl for them.”

“They’re wrong.” Killian’s eyes are ominous. Bloodthirsty. “You’re perfect. Every part of you is.”

“Y-you don’t know me enough to say that.” *Hiccup.*

“Of course I know enough,” he thunders.

“Three losers, that’s what they are. Her parents and her sister.” Anger seeps through Carter’s words. His fingers are full of love, though, weaving through my hair, softly untangling the knots. “I’d have burned their fucking building if Amara would’ve let me.”

It’s their pity and passion talking. I don’t need either at the moment. We’ve said enough, and I don’t need to talk anymore. I purged what hurt me the most, and now, I want more.

My relief will come in the form of breaking my skin. Of taking and giving, of blunt fingernails and sharp teeth doing every unholy thing imaginable to me.

But they won’t let me stop unless I’m done telling them what happened, so I hurry the fuck up.

“They always held money over our heads as an incentive to behave. Never created a trust fund for either me or Melina. Melina did exactly as they said, which is why they let her have everything she wanted. I didn’t. I don’t care to have millions of dollars if it means becoming the bitter people they are. Bitter and fake and sleeping in separate bedrooms. No fucking way.”

I loosen Killian’s tie, hinting at what I want in return for my honesty. Despite the shame of him knowing what my parents think of me, I ask for his affection.

And he gives it to me. He lets me touch him.

“Since I was fifteen, I rode the subway downtown whenever I could. I walked the neighborhood dogs, babysat kids for pennies.” My actions must spur on Carter because his hold on my throat tightens. “As long as it meant saving up, I did it. By the time I was eighteen, I was able to rent their shop and the apartment above it. Barely. I…”

I sigh.

“You what, pet?” Carter splays his hand on my stomach, pressing our bodies together.

I tell them about Airbnb to which Carter bristles. How my parents used this phone call as an excuse to both disown me and ruin my life. To crush the bug under their proverbial boot.

Carter and Killian glare at each other. Their silent conversation ends, and now they’re looking at me.

Neither of them says a damn thing.

Their faces say everything. Scrunched eyebrows. Murderous scowls. Venom dripping from their eyes.

They might bash my dad’s head in like they did the guy at the bar. Threaten my mom. Make her pee in her silk designer underwear. Force Melina to watch her idols humiliated by my avenging angels.

A girl can dream.

“End of story,” I say when the silence becomes overbearing. “Fuck me or let me go find a new home for my plants if that’s even possible. But don’t hug me. Don’t be sweet. Just don’t.”

“You’re staying right here, Amara.” Killian takes me from Carter. He’s not gentle, placing me on the floor, shoving my dress up, baring me to

them. “You’ll stay, but trust me, you’ll wish you hadn’t.”

Carter steps next to him, pulling down my panties over my sneakers and kicking my legs apart with his shiny dress shoe. Both men stand side by side, shoulder to shoulder. Their thick cocks outline their black pants. Their arms are crossed over their chests.

Dirty blond hair by raven-black one with two sets of intense eyes eating me up.

My pussy is bare for the two of them to see. My clit is swollen, my nipples straining against the fabric of my dress.

“No bra,” Carter muses, rubbing the scruff on his chin.

“It’s like she came here asking to be fucked,” Killian adds.

With each second ticking by, the emotional pain dissolves. My depravity wins over.

I cried plenty for my bitch-ass parents. Now it’s time to cry for my sadistic lovers.

Carter slips Cyclone out of his pocket, falling to his knees. “What Amara wants, Amara gets.”

A second later, my dress parts in two.

Just like that.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

Killian

"Please," she begs.

Over the last few days, my conscience has been nagging at me. After all, taking my stepson up the ass and diving into this three-way relationship isn't very fatherly.

Now, hearing Amara's story, my self-doubts have been obliterated. I feel like I should get a father of the fucking year mug.

I knew who her parents were. Everyone who lives in New York has heard of the Carmichaels. What I didn't know was they hated their daughter.

Miserable assholes. It took me six months of just *looking* at her, and I'm falling for this girl. The woman who makes the unconventional love I have for my stepson feel right.

She doesn't need those fuckers. She has us. She'll always have us.

"Begging." My hands are on my belt and I unbuckle it, enjoying the way both Amara and Carter's eyes latch on my movements. "I like that."

"Me too." Carter smirks.

"Get her on her knees." I unzip my pants.

Carter manhandles her without an ounce of grace. Brutal. Fucking hot. Just how she likes it. Her eyes glimmer at his touch, her cheeks flushing.

"Beautiful girl." My cock jerks in my hand when I take myself out, stroking slowly. "I seem to remember your mouth stretches as well as your ass."

Her ripped dress rests in tatters beneath her.

Perverse thoughts course through me, of dressing her in our staff outfit later. We're going to roleplay sometime in the near future. We'll still be the hotel owners.

But Amara will be the little maid who begs us to keep her job.

One day.

"Why, are you planning to fuck me together there? I don't think it works that way," she sasses.

"Brat." I tug on her hair, slapping her naughty lips with my cock. Precum smears on her mouth, and she greedily licks it when I pull back.

"Pet, we're not that sadistic. You are getting both of them, though."

"In your mouth."

Her bottom lip drops. Her breaths become shallow. "Two?"

"What's the matter, little cum slut?" Carter unbuckles and rolls his fly down. He releases his cock, slapping her cheek with the pierced tip. "There I was, thinking I heard you begging for pain."

He strokes himself once, twice, and a bead of precum leaks out.

Biting back a groan, I turn back to Amara, tipping her chin up. Her eyes dance from me to him. To the knife he's still holding in his free hand.

"Don't think you can take us?" I'm greedy, demanding her attention.

"I—" she starts.

Carter presses his thumb in her bottom lip, shoving it down. He slides the knife into her mouth with the blunt edge of the blade first.

I'm turned on. So fucking hard at the sight of her white teeth closing in on the metal. Her growl is that of a caged animal. And I love that. Way more than I should.

"Doesn't matter what she thinks." Carter removes the knife from her mouth. Pressing the sharp point to her shoulder, he carves the letter O as she hisses, before tossing it to the side.

My sick fucking mind loves that too.

Amara doesn't cry out, just runs her fingers over the area she can't see. Moans. Tries making sense of what Carter carved there.

"O," he growls in her ear. His sick and satisfied tone doesn't escape me. "O for ours, pet. Always ours."

Her smile—psychotic and reminding me so much of Carter's—splits her face in half.

He straightens, and we're standing shoulder to shoulder.

“Show us what a good girl you are. Suck us together.” I push my cock between her parted lips. “We’ll make you come so hard, they might even hear you behind these soundproof walls.”

She gags as I shove the rest of my cock all the way down her throat.

“Fuck,” I groan, grabbing the back of her head. Pinning her face to my groin.

Tears glisten in her eyes as I fuck her face, stretching her mouth. Spit dribbles down her chin. Her teeth graze my shaft.

I only stop pummeling into her hot little mouth when Carter’s hand comes to her cheek.

“Open, dirty girl.” He hooks his finger to the corner of her mouth, stretching it for him. “That’s it.”

Her lips stretch, and her chocolate brown eyes widen. Carter holds the base of his cock, guiding himself toward her mouth while sliding his length against mine.

And then the two of us are inside her.

One curse after the other slip past my lips as we start rolling our hips. Or maybe it’s Carter’s. No, it’s both of us.

This feels so good. Too good to be tamed. So much pleasure can’t be contained in an organ as small as our lungs.

We fuck her mouth, the head of Carter’s cock rubbing against mine. His piercing chafing my throbbing tip. Our balls slap her chin, where more spit trickles.

Carter’s hand and mine meet on Amara’s head where we each grab a chunk of her hair.

Her moans and eager gaze below us are just. Fucking. Perfect.

“I don’t want to come so fast. Not without her.” Carter slows the rhythm of his thrusts. He tightens his grip on her hair. “But fuck, I’m getting there.”

I’m with him there. Close enough to spend my seed in her mouth. Still aware of my surroundings, though. I refuse to go there by myself.

So I pull out of Amara’s mouth. Without questioning me, Carter follows, holding her in place as she retches.

“Exquisite, beautiful little thing.” I arrange her on her back. Carter loses his clothes behind us. “I promised you you’d scream, didn’t I?”

“Don’t pity fuck me.” She bares her teeth, threatening me.

Only two people in this world can do that without having their hearts ripped out of their chests. Both of them are in this room with me.

My eyebrows lower on my forehead. “Never.” I rise to dispose of my shoes, pants, and the rest of my suit.

“You’re about to get railed. Hard.” Carter holds his cock out like he’s wielding a weapon. “No one’s motherfucking pitying you, pet.”

Neither of us will show pity or mercy for her parents, either. That’ll come later.

For now, this is all about her. She deserves the world.

We kneel next to her. It’s then that I notice it. A drop of blood stains on her bottom lip. She got hurt from taking us together.

A feral growl rises in my throat. I bend to lick the blood off her. The same moment Carter does. Our tongues entwine. Our lips brush. Our teeth inflict pain. Not pity. Not mercy. None of that.

Amara is kinky to the core, even when her heart is hurting. She kisses us back, then just Carter when I lick up the dried tears on her skin. Devour the taste of our cocks on her tongue. Revel in our joined, depraved needs.

“Spread your legs wider,” I demand. I don’t wait though, pulling one to my side. Carter mirrors my actions.

I watch Amara’s arousal dripping from her pussy to her crack to the floor. Think of the pints of blood that’s had to be cleaned from this room. The intestines Carter carved out when he’s in one of his creative moods.

We’re mauling her body in a warzone. The images thrust another wave of adrenaline into my veins, and I act. I shove three fingers in her pussy, up to the last knuckle.

She screams, her back arching as if she’s been hit by lightning. Carter and I sit up, watching her pained expression from above with rapt attention. Her eyes are crazed and her twisted lips curve up into a satisfied grin.

“Your screams are going to make me blow my load, A.” Carter pinches her clit while I drive my fingers deep into her, over and over again. “Do it again.”

“You’ll need to hurt me for that,” Amara snarls, challenging him.

“My absolute pleasure.” He twists her clit and tugs on it.

Her cry pierces our ears. At that moment, I understand his obsession with her even more. She makes abusing her so fucking worth it.

His cock jerks at the sight. As does mine. We give her everything we’ve got, degrading and praising her in tandem.

“Touch him.” Her voice is shaky. “Touch each other.”

“Look at you,” I blurt out. I’m not an affectionate man, but she drags it out of me. Forces words I haven’t spoken before. “Dirty and perfect.”

“She is.” Carter’s fingers wrap around my length.

I grab his face. Amara’s unhinged smirk is a satisfied one. It soon changes when we bring her to the edge. Abuse and attend to her pussy that squeezes on my fingers. It doesn’t take her long to shudder. To cry out for us.

“On your back,” I bark at Carter. Turning to the sated Amara, I play with the rim of her asshole, sliding a wet finger inside. “This was just the beginning. You’re about to get what you came here for, beautiful girl. Pain.”

She whimpers. My balls tighten at how fucking gorgeous she is. Then she wiggles on her back, attempting to escape once more. Good thing she gets off on being hunted as much as we are on catching her.

“There’s no running away from this.” I close my fingers on her on one of her ankles, while Carter grips onto the other. “Next time, maybe be careful what you wish for.”

“Or don’t. Please don’t.” Carter lies on his back, fisting himself. “Spit on me, Killian. Spit on me for her.”

I move over to him, saliva filling my mouth. My spit lands on his dick, his fingers, his balls. He groans, spreading it over his length.

“See?” Taming the need to lick him clean, I return my attention to our girl. “Nice and wet. The pain wouldn’t be *that* bad.”

Carter lets out a short, throaty laugh. He helps me lift her struggling little frame right above him. We position her with her back to him, her growling face looking at me.

“Begonias,” I remind her. She nods.

My hand moves up and down my cock when I leave her to Carter.

With one hand, he aims his cock to her clenched ass. The other, he uses to tease her clit, stroking reverently to ease her into it. He nudges his pierced tip at her tight ass, and she cries out.

“Open the fuck up,” he orders her.

She moans when he bites her shoulder, but her body refuses to relax. Since neither of us is interested in making her bleed, I bend to lick her clit. My tongue licks, my teeth nip. I lower to give attention to Carter’s dick. From his balls up to the head of his dick, I run my tongue while spitting on him.

Her brown gaze is mesmerized by my actions. Her body trembles whenever Carter lets out another harsh moan.

“Jesus, that’s hot.” Carter’s legs strain, his fist tightening on her.

“I’m done lubing his cock, Amara,” I warn, digging my fingers to her thighs, my lips at her clit. “He’s pushing inside you whether you like it or not.”

I sense the moment her body submits to us. She moans and pleads. Relaxing on Carter, yielding to his big cock spearing her ass.

“Carter,” she whines. “Killian.” She reaches out to me.

With Carter’s help, we lower her on his cock. On his chest. I position myself between her legs, teasing her pussy with the tip of my cock. She lets out a needy sound, bending her knees, opening herself for me.

“That’s it, baby.” Carter massages her clit, holds her arm, and thrusts into her from below. “We have you now. You’re ours. There’s no running from this.”

“We’re the only ones who’ll ever hurt you.” I push into her tight little cunt, made tighter from Carter’s cock in her ass. My hands find Carter’s neck and hers, fingers curling around them as I start pounding. “Us, and no one else.”

My hair falls to my forehead. I don’t care. I don’t care about anything except rutting into her. Removing the pain of what her parents did to her. Filling her with us. With our torment. Our love.

“Killie,” she cries out, bouncing from being pounded by two men.

Her nickname for me. I should hate it. Especially when I’m anything but sweet as I tear into her pussy.

I don’t.

My balls slap on Carter’s. My mouth descends on hers, then his. On their throats. Their necks are salty from sweats, the blood on her shoulder coppery.

Their moans, groans, and pleas envelop me. I can’t bring myself to hate anything in this whole goddamn world. Not a single thing.

“Such a good girl.” Carter tweaks her pierced nipple between her body and mine. “Who do you belong to, pet?”

“You.” Her lips part. “I’m coming, fuck, I’m about to come.”

“Good girl.” Despite the praise, I don’t ease up on her.

Neither does Carter. I feel his cock from inside of her. Feel him swelling the harder he gives it to her.

“Come, Amara,” I demand, gazing deep into her brown eyes. “Do it.”

We hold her down when the orgasm ripples through her. She milks us with her two tight holes clenching on us, and we empty ourselves inside of her.

“Thank you.” Tears leak down her cheeks. “Thank you.”

I pull out of her first, then Carter. We flip her slowly to her side, kissing and hugging her and each other from either side of her. He’s at her back, I’m hugging her front.

Carter strokes her hair.

I get up to fetch a clean cloth at the sink in the back room. When I return, I dab it on her drenched pussy, then her ass.

“Nothing to thank us for.” I lie on my side, wrapping her in my arms and legs. Touching Carter, keeping them warm. My family. “We’re always here for you.”

“Always.” He fingers the O shape he left on her shoulder. I join him. “But call us next time, A. We’ll come for you, no matter what.”

“I will.” Her shy smile is tired. Her eyes flutter shut. “Promise.”

We give her this reprieve. These few minutes of shut-eye.

“Her shop,” I mouth, needing to take care of business.

“I know,” he mouths back. “We’ll fix it.”

I lean forward, kissing his full lips. He kisses me back, and it’s right. So right.

He slips from under her, whispering that he’s going to get a first aid kit to clean and bandage the O on her shoulder. Amara doesn’t even stir.

“I’m proud of you,” I tell him. For taking care of Amara. For taking me in. For everything.

He blushes and gives me the finger.

Some things never change.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

Amara

"You're planning on taking turns driving me around?" I ask Carter on the ride over to their penthouse after I woke up on their office floor. "Like you take turns on my ass?"

A devious smile curves his lips. "We're not taking turns, pet."

"Breathe" by The Prodigy comes up next in his playlist. His eyes twinkle in that wicked way of his. I bet if we were on the freeway right now, he'd speed up to 160. I'd let my head out and scream something like, "Fuck my parents," into the wind. Until Killian's firm hands would pull me back in.

One of us would have to be the voice of reason. It's damn sure not Carter or me, so—

"We're taking, period."

"I might say no," I challenge, teasing his fly.

His cock swells. Greeting me. I slide my hand back to my lap. No pairing up.

"You might, and we'll ignore you." He raises an eyebrow. "Unless the *no* turns to *begonias*."

"What if I forget?" My saccharine sweet voice has his eyes snapping to mine. He sees through my playfulness. I continue anyway, "What if my floaty brain says petunias instead?"

"Brat." Carter's smirk doesn't fool me. His hold on the steering wheel tightens, his knuckles whitening at the prospect of spanking me. "We'll remind you about begonias. Then slam into you until you scream it."

"You're going to be rough?" I whisper, pretending to be scared.

“Oh, baby. Your pussy will be so sore.” Though his eyes are on the road, I feel every ounce of his attention on me. “You won’t be able to walk for days.”

“And you two?”

“Don’t worry about us, pet.” Carter’s smile bathes the inside of his Porsche with darkness. A decadent one. “We’ll have enough of each other when we fuck your pretty pussy. Together.”

“I’ll scratch your chests.” Heat rushes down my body, thinking of them both in my pussy together. “Make you bleed.”

“Tease.” Carter shoots me a look. “You’ll live to regret it.”

“Doubt it.” I probably will.

I imagine I would as early as this evening. When Killian’s back from work and it’s just the three of us in the penthouse. There were arrangements to be made for Luna’s upcoming wedding and he had to stay late.

A wedding Opal and I are a part of as well. Giddiness fills my belly, remembering the moment Luna hired me to make her bridal bouquet and flower arrangements.

Weeks ago, on the day I hired Opal, I blabbered about my wedding venture to her. Luna fired her flower vendor that same moment and hired me on the spot.

She chose my shop. Mine.

Not yours.

A twinge of sadness ruins what little joy I had. Unless a miracle happens, I won’t have a shop in two weeks.

Carter and Killian might let me bring my plants and flowers to their place to keep them alive. They would, I just know it. But I can’t ask them about that.

I’m already asking too much. Their affection. Their home.

Asking them to live with the dirt and Opal and me messing up their perfect home is out of the question.

My smile falters, lead weighing heavy on my soul. I look down at the hotel concierge uniform they gave me. Better focus on the beautiful black pencil skirt. On the perfect fit of the black dress shirt.

Anything but this.

“What is it, A?” Carter’s fingers find mine, prying them from my lap. Holding my hand over the console. Rubbing his thumb over my palm. “Talk to me.”

I groan. I left the hotel smiling. This wasn't supposed to happen.

"Nothing." Lying to Carter pains me, so I turn my head away toward the passenger window. Toward the outside world.

Concrete and glass. People yapping on their phones. Cars and yellow cabs.

Life goes on. And so will mine.

I shake my head, a new sense of determination flowing through me. I'm far better now than I was when I talked to my parents this morning. My men filled the hollow spaces in my heart, and I'm ready to fight. Or at least shake off this crappy feeling.

"You have us." He brings my hand to his lips, biting me when I fail to answer. "You're not alone. You won't ever be. If I have to carve another million Os into your skin so you'll remember, I will. I'll mark every inch of your skin with Cyclone. Killian might join the fun."

"I was thinking." A smile that isn't so forced anymore creeps up my lips. "My parents won't win. They don't love me? Fucking fine. I don't love them right back."

"That's my girl." Carter's teeth bite into me a second time. "They don't deserve your love. Never have. Never will. You're special. One of a fucking kind. They're the assholes who are too dumb to see it."

"Fuck, when you say stuff like that"—my eyes lower to his erection, my thighs clenching—"all I want to do is go drag Killian back home and never leave."

Oh, shit. *Home*. I called their place our home.

Carter doesn't blink. Totally comfortable.

"And I thought I was insatiable." His short laugh reaches straight to my pussy. "At this rate, we'll have to add another man just to keep you satisfied."

"Why?" I don't stop before I spit out what's on my mind. I rarely do. "So there'll be three of you to beat up anyone who looks at me the wrong way?"

Carter slams the brakes at a red light. Hard. Too hard. My head flies forward.

"Today was a one-off." He levels me with his serious gaze. Any trace of humor has been wiped off his face. "Beating up members isn't something we do."

My question was supposed to be a tease. But now that Carter's avoiding it, I'm curious. My earlier suspicions resurface, bubbling and demanding

answers.

"Why?"

"They're rich, entitled pricks that like to mingle in our hotel. Most of them are just that. Smug. Not idiots." He presses the gas, giving the road his undivided attention. "They know better than to test us. Christopher slipped. I wish I could fucking kill him for how he treated you."

"You'd do that for me?" The car rumbles as we descend into the parking garage of his apartment building. My heaved, excited breaths are louder. "Kill someone?"

"You'd like that?" The creases on his forehead are no more. Carter tilts his head to me, raising an eyebrow. "Would that turn you on, pet? Me slitting someone's throat for you?"

Yes. Very much so.

"Well, actually killing someone might be taking it too far." Another lie. It wounds my soul to do it. Sadly, it's my only choice.

The truth will make him think I'm sick. I couldn't hide my excitement when he bashed Christopher's head into the marble bar. The *crack* sounds. The trickle of blood down his forehead. Watching it ignited dark, decadent desires inside of me.

My pussy dripped for Killian and Carter like never before.

Their brutality is better than watching my flowers blooming. And that's saying *a lot*.

Then again, who would want a girl who thinks gore is hot?

Maybe them? Maybe.

I'll wait for the right time. Spring my crazy on them once we're solid.

"You liked what we did to him," Carter deadpans, pulling up into his parking space. "Don't lie to me."

He's curious. Probing. If I'm not careful, he'll suck the truth right out of me.

"I got wet," I offer him a half-truth. "Can you blame a girl? You two went all possessive cavemen back there."

He opens his mouth to, undoubtedly, resume his line of questioning.

I'm quicker than him.

"Are you really okay with the three of us together?" I know he is, but I have to change the subject.

"Yes." His eyebrows scrunch, gray eyes studying me. "Fucking love it."

Swiftly, I'm out of my seat and straddling his lap. "Tell me more."

He groans when I shove my fingernails into his soft, black hair. I don't grind my hips, simply resting there, feeling his cock straining between us. Thriving on his heated gaze.

Mission accomplished. The man's distracted.

"The three of us, together." Carter's hands hover at my sides, and he drops them to his sides, cursing. "We have a future. In a twisted, fucked up way, we were meant to be. This is forever, Amara. To the grave and beyond it. For-fucking-ever."

I squint my eyes. While I meant this to be a diversion, our conversation has turned out to be something I've been longing to hear. This is the sincerest Carter has been about his feelings.

"Turned on and satisfied." He grips my jaw, bringing my mouth to his. "That's how I like seeing you."

His kiss is soft. Even his bite is gentle like he isn't after my blood.

"Tonight." Lifting me, he helps me back to my seat. He gets out, walks around the hood, and opens the passenger door for me, outstretching his arm which I quickly take. "Kill and I will have more of your satisfied moans. More of your pussy dripping on us."

"Only if I get to have your cum on me." I flash him a mischievous smile. "On my tits, on my face, on my—"

"Amara." He pinches my bruised ass. I squeak, and he laughs. "You're driving me fucking nuts."

His laugh is contagious. Incredibly so. I squeal, taking off and sprinting toward the elevators.

His feet pound on the asphalt, chasing me.

How did I ever get so lucky?

• • • • • • • • •

One of my parents' choice words to describe me was *vulgar*.

Fuck them. I'm my own person and do whatever the hell I please.

Meaning yawn without covering my mouth when I wake up from my nap. It's been almost twenty-four hours since the Christopher incident, and it's still weighing heavily on me.

Once Carter and Killian left for the hotel, I meant to call Opal about Luna's wedding, run things by her one last time. But my body decided otherwise.

Until now.

I stretch out in Carter's enormous bed, wiggling my toes under the soft covers.

Carter and Killian aren't back yet. I don't expect them for another few hours. I snatch the phone from the nightstand, consider calling Opal, then decide against it. She deserves to have the weekend off.

Besides, I don't feel like telling her our shop is no more. I don't feel like talking about it at all.

Even if it's temporary.

Nope.

Would that turn you on, pet? Me slitting someone's throat for you?

Carter's questions from yesterday resurface. Why would he ask that?

What else is he hiding?

Unlocking my phone, I browse the internet for news on Voltage. This would be the first time I've done it. Up until today, I've never researched them.

When Reece, their purchasing manager, called me, I was too excited to do anything other than accept his offer. They were a huge client for my small business. The break I needed.

I squealed. I danced in place. Ever since, they've always paid on time. I left it at that.

My dad would've had more choice words for me for not doing my research.

Stupid. Airheaded. Reckless.

I prefer trusting and optimistic.

My gut told me I was heading in the right direction. Which I was.

The past six months have been incredible.

But I don't like feeling left in the dark. Don't like the feeling of being made stupid.

I'm giving my heart to these two men, but I have to know. I have to.

• • • • • • • • •

One hour later, and nothing.

No press interviews. No official website.

Diddly fucking squat.

Voltage is an exclusive, members-only hotel. It would've been strange if something *did* pop up. Right?

Right.

I'm about to get out of bed and head to the shower when a message notification flashes on my phone.

A smile tears at my lips when I see who it is. Them.

They opened a group chat.

Killian: *We're headed home early. Take off the T-shirt you're in and wait for us.*

Obsessive, stalker men. I look straight into the camera in Carter's room, stick my tongue out, and hide under the covers.

Muffin: *Hope your pussy is ready.*

Muffin: *Scratch that. I hope you're sore. I'm into inflicting pain today.*

I'm still hiding from them. Still not showing them whether I took my T-shirt off or not.

Just to poke them a little more, I type out: *When are you not?*

Killian: *Amara, if you're looking for trouble, you have it.*

Me: *Oh, thank fuck. I thought I'd have to beg.*

Muffin: *We're so tying you up.*

Killian: *And spanking your ass. Your cunt too.*

I change Killian's name on my phone to Killie, then tease them with a lie.

Me: *Sorry, no can do. I have plans. I'm going shopping with Opal.*

Killie: *You know what? We take it back. You're not getting fucked in a comfortable bed. We're fucking you here. Tonight.*

Whatever happens in their hotel ceases to interest me. Without letting them see me, I wrangle out of my T-shirt and throw it over the covers before snatching my arm back inside.

Killie: *Put that shirt back on. I'm picking you up.*

Muffin: *If you're thinking about being a brat, don't. What you're going to go through today will be painful enough.*

Excitement rushes through me. I'll never not want the kind of pain they promise.

Me: *How long do I have to be ready?*

No other message comes through. Another form of torture.

Another pain I happily take on as I rush to change into one of my old, plain, red and blue dresses the two men can rip right off me.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

Carter

Three raps on the door have my head snapping up in that direction.

"Killian?" Luna's voice reaches from the walkie talkie on the desk. She's outside our office at Voltage. "Carter?"

"No fucking way," I mouth, then press my lips shut.

Killian and Amara should be here any moment now.

I was just about to get up from where I've been for the past forty minutes behind my desk. I'm ready to head to our special torture chamber we have downstairs. Where kinky members do kinky shit. Where we torment unruly ones when we're in *that* mood.

Where we were going to take our backtalking, bratty little Amara.

Work crap like signing off on an invoice can and *will* have to wait.

And it *is* back office crap. After the show Kill and I put on yesterday, I highly doubt any of our members have been acting out. The word must've spread that we've taken our punishments up a notch.

Most of them had to have heard about it already. They'll be on their best behavior.

Unless they have a death wish.

Most of them don't.

But just in case…

I stay silent, waiting it out.

"Carter, you're stabbing the walkie talkie button with Cyclone. I know you're in there."

Fuck. Looking down, I see I'm holding my knife, poking the push-to-talk button with the tip. Over and over and over again.

I bring the walkie closer, grunting, "Come in, Luna."

My free hand flies to my phone, opening up the messages app.

Me: *Kill, Luna's in the office. If you're still in the penthouse, stay there. I'll let you know if it's serious.*

The handle to our office door lowers, the door opens, and Luna steps inside. "Thank fuck you haven't left for the day."

Dragging a member of our hotel by the collar of his green plaid shirt inside.

Someone who, unlike Christopher, she can handle easily.

"Archie Hall," I acknowledge the city clerk slash brothel manager.

Luna slams the door behind her. Shoves her walkie into her jacket.

And walks him like a dog on a leash toward my desk.

His black hair is a mess, his tiny blue eyes watering. He's shorter and skinnier than Luna. I almost pity him.

Almost.

Except he's getting in the way between me and Amara and Killian. Except he's wronged us somehow.

Yeah, I don't pity him at all.

"Help," he whispers, wide eyes gazing up at me.

"Me?" I bark a harsh laugh, pointing my knife at my chest as though I'm shocked. "You're asking *me* for help?"

"Anyone, help." Spittle flies out of his mouth.

Whatever he did, he should've thought about *not* doing it sooner.

My phone buzzes in my hand. I ignore the pathetic man in favor of reading Killian's message.

Killian: *We're in the parking lot. What's wrong?*

"No one's helping you, bastard," Luna growls, rounding the desk and throwing Archie at my feet. "Voltage isn't a fucking meat market. Our staff isn't for sale."

I quirk an eyebrow, and Luna nods.

"Yes, Carter. I had to rescue Kim from his room. She was terrified, shaking and crying. Thank fuck, we have an alarm button on the cleaning crews' pagers."

"You're asking for my help when you broke rule two?" My smile doesn't reach my eyes. "When you threatened one of *our* staff?"

No, I’m not amused. Nothing but rage runs through my veins.

Yesterday, Christopher sparked the flame to light my overprotective nature.

Archie here is stoking the motherfucking flame.

My anger isn’t just meant for this prick and what he’s done to Kim.

It’s the thought he could’ve cornered Amara when we weren’t around that sets me off.

What she could’ve looked like when he threatened her. He could’ve had his hands on her.

He could’ve hurt her.

Our.

Woman.

He’s a dead man. Fucking walking corpse.

“Please.” The man reaches for my shoes. His beady eyes plead with me. “Please, Carter.”

“No.”

Every second he breathes, I’m more on edge.

First thing I do is kick him in the face. The sound of his nose cracking soothes some of my unrestrained rage. Only when I can breathe again do I get back to Killian.

Me: *Archie Hall threatened Kim. Propositioned her. She cried.*

Three dots flash on my screen when Luna says, “Not such a big man now, are you, Arch?”

“When she said no, that’s when he pinned her to a wall.” Luna crosses her arms over her chest, spitting on Archie. “Tried to take her clothes off. Said he’d break her in for his brothel.”

Apparently, the rumors about what went down here yesterday haven’t reached everyone. Not Archie, for sure.

Had they made it to him, he wouldn’t have laid a hand on Kim.

If they had, I wouldn’t be here. I’d be with Killian, fucking Amara’s bratty mouth.

The thought of our girl waiting for me has a new surge of violence coursing through my body.

My smile doesn’t leave my lips as I read Killian’s reply.

Killian: *I blindfolded Amara. Instructed her to stay put in the torture chamber. I’ll help you wrap it up fast.*

Under different circumstances, he would've never left Amara. But I know Killian. I know he's furious for the same reasons I am. Still, Amara shouldn't be there by herself.

He can take it out on my ass later.

Me: *No need, I have this.*

Killian: *I wasn't asking for your permission.*

Me: *Stay with her.*

Archie wails like the miserable asshole he is when I step between his legs. His cock and balls scrunch beneath my shoe.

What a beautiful sound. Let's see if I can make it happen again. Maybe this time I—

The door flies open.

"No can do, Carter." Killian marches inside in all his glory, taking in the scene in the room, then closing the door. "I can't show our prospective member the room downstairs when I'm like…this. When we have a second transgression within less than forty-eight hours."

His violence is much different from mine. There's no smile on his face. In fact, his expression betrays nothing. Which means he's in a murderous mood.

A torturing one he doesn't want to take out on Amara.

"What's *this*?" Archie whimpers from the floor.

I twist my foot, winking at the screaming asshole.

"You have someone down there?" Luna's eyebrows scrunch. "I was hoping we could show Archie around. Make him pay."

"Any other day, we would." Killian places a hand on her shoulder, a comforting father figure. "We have a woman and her friend checking the space out. We'll be there in a few to supervise." Killian's dark eyes zoom in on Archie's tear-stricken face. "Right after we're done here. You did good, Luna. You're dismissed."

She doesn't protest. We have our reasons, and she rarely doubts us. Her heels clink as she leaves, and when the door closes, we're alone in the office with Archie's sobs.

After I relay the full story to Killian, he cocks an eyebrow at me. "You've got something in mind for him?"

"I don't like his face." My voice, laced with amusement, causes Archie to lift his hands. A derisive laugh bubbles in my throat. "Nice try, loser."

“Not a fan of it, either.” Killian’s kicks Archie’s ear from under him. “I’d love nothing more than remove it.”

“No,” Archie screams.

Most of them do.

I’d say I’m immune to it, but that’d be a lie. I live for their screams.

“Yes.” I leave his smashed crotch, crouching next to his face. “You weren’t a coward when you messed with Kim. What’s changed?”

“It was a mistake. I’m sorry.”

“We’re way past that.” Killian crouches at his other side, peeling Archie’s hands off his face. “Way, way, past sorry.”

My eyes cut to Killian. I see I was right. He imagines it could’ve been Amara instead of Kim.

Meaning there’s no saving Archie.

Meaning he’s in for a world of pain.

“Help.” Another half-assed cry. “God, help me.”

“God doesn’t hang around Voltage.” I lift my knife to his face. “Or haven’t you noticed?”

My left nut sack doesn’t give two shits about Archie’s reply. No part of me does. Hence why I don’t wait for him to respond.

I go straight for the kill. Archie’s skin breaks easily when I slice the perimeter around his face. While Killian holds the loser down by the shoulders. I make sure to go deep.

It’ll help Killian later.

“Go at it.” My tongue swipes across my bottom lip as I watch Archie’s blood pouring like a waterfall to the floor. “He’s all yours.”

“Ugly”—Killian buries his fingers beneath the skin of Archie’s forehead —“fucking”—he pulls, grunting as Archie starts puking and shaking on the floor—“face.”

Since Archie’s skin is putting up a fight, I assist Killian. I shove my knife further beneath Archie’s skin, cutting, cutting, and cutting.

Once Killian begins removing Archie’s face now, it’s easy for him. He’s persistent while he removes the man’s forehead, eyebrows, cheeks and nose.

He gets stuck again at Archie’s mouth, and I use Cyclone again. I tear through the tissues that connect Archie’s face to his bones and muscles, and look at this, the skin lifts.

Precious.

Deserving.

By the time we're done, Archie's screams have silenced. I put two fingers to his neck, feeling nothing.

"Only good thing he's ever done." I smile at Killian. "I can't wait to go to Amara."

"Me too. But first." Killian lifts what's left of Archie's face and strikes the man with, well, with himself. Beats his face over his body.

Blood spurts on our clothes. Vomit and other bodily fluids trickle to the floor. Archie's hollowed eyes stare back at us.

I grab the useless face from Killian, repeating what he did and slapping a dead Archie.

At that, I chuckle. A true, genuine laugh.

We both stand up, striding over to the other room where we can clean up and change for Amara.

Now we're ready for her.

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CHAPTER THIRTY

Amara

"Pet." I hear a deep voice say somewhere around me.

At least I think I do.

Everything's dark behind the silk blindfold Killian tied around my head.

He said to be a good girl and wait here for them, and I have.

But it's been a while. I've been lost in space and time sitting on this leather chair, in this room with the faint hint of bleach scent.

Waiting. Waiting. Waiting.

I could be hearing wrong.

"Beautiful girl." A rough hand that smells of soap and not bleach cups my cheek. Killian. He's here. "You haven't moved an inch. Such a good girl."

"He's right. You have been good." The knuckles of another soapy-smelling palm trail from my other cheek down to my chin. Carter. "Too bad it's too late."

"Too late for what?" Every pore in my body begs to be punished. For them to tell me what a bad girl I've been.

After yesterday, I feel as if our connection has grown tenfold. So deep, it's unbreakable. I need them like I need air. Every bit of them.

"You've been a brat." Carter's fingers, no longer tender, grip my chin and tilt my head up. "So this whole good, obedient girl act? Late. Too late."

The way my breath hitches evokes two, angry, ravenous growls from them.

One hand curls around my wrist, a second around my other one. Both men guide my hands to their bodies, and I don't argue. They hold my palms up in the air while I listen to belts unbuckling and zippers rolling down.

Then my hands press to either of their thick, silky cocks.

"Oh." I sigh, gripping them tighter, getting more and more wet from their sounds of pleasure. "This, uh, this doesn't feel like punishment."

The second the words leave my mouth, both men push my hands off them.

"Why?"

In the background, I hear one pair of shoes walking away from me. The other man stays close, grips me by the shoulders and hoists me to my feet.

"Don't worry about being punished, A." Carter's smile reaches to me through his voice. "We'll get there."

My lips part as I lean forward for a kiss.

All I get is a bite to my bottom lip and then Carter hisses, "You taunted us. Denied us *these*." He wraps one of my breasts over my dress and twists. "Threatened to go out with Opal, taking your pretty pussy with you."

My knees wobble when he cups my sex roughly. "Please."

"We're going to deny you plenty today." His tongue swipes across my jawline and cheek. His teeth reach my nose and lock on the tip. "Plenty."

Carter spins me away from him, swipes my hair to the side and lowers the zipper of my dress. He shoves each strap down and lets the fabric fall to the floor.

"Naked," Carter muses at my lack of undergarments.

"Will that save me from a punishment?" I ask, hoping to hell it won't.

Smack! Carter's open palm smacks my ass.

"Bed's ready," Killian's voice booms.

Carter doesn't waste a second. He hauls me off the floor bridal style, carrying me in the direction of where Killian's voice came from. Neither of the men responds to my squeals. Carter's arms don't budge at the fight I'm giving.

Relentless. Powerful. Kings.

My kings.

"What is this room, anyway?" My curiosity is louder than my need to be their prey.

"Sex dungeon." I think I hear a hint of deceit in Carter's voice. Like he's only telling me a half truth.

I'll investigate it later. Killian's distracting me. There are sounds reaching from about three feet away of someone losing his clothes. He's getting naked.

"A room we reserve for our VIP members." Killian's so close that I almost feel him. "And now it's yours. It's been wiped clean. We ordered new toys yesterday. The chair you sat on is new too. Everything you'll touch today is. Even this bed."

"You've been planning this?"

"Incoming." Carter doesn't answer, dropping me on a soft mattress.

I'm still trying to figure out where I am. The men, however, don't need any sort of settling down. They're already on me, one hand tugging at my wrist, another at my ankle.

"What are you doing?" I struggle, which earns me a chuckle from Carter and a bite on my calf from the man who's not laughing, Killian.

"Tying you up." Killian sounds gruff as he tightens what feels like a leather cuff around one ankle, then the other.

He's pretty good at avoiding my kicking. Same as Carter with my punches. Once they're done, I'm spread out in a way that doesn't hurt. I shake my hands and feet, and now it hurts.

I'm restricted to this four-poster bed.

Carter and Killian are going to use my body while I won't be able to fight back. Arousal trickles down my crack. My nipples are pulled tight.

"Again, doesn't seem like a punishment," I tease.

I expect a slap on my pussy for that one. Have my nipple pinched. Feel the sting of teeth biting my flesh.

They don't do any of it.

I hear Carter stripping while Killian pulls the blindfold up to my forehead.

His face comes to view first. He stands over me, eyes studying my face. His lips curve into a smirk. "You like poking the bears, beautiful girl?"

"I—" The word transforms into a scream when something hot lands on my navel.

My gaze flies to Carter who stands at the foot of the bed. I watch this beautiful specimen naked. Every muscle on his sculpted body is accentuated even in the dim light of the room. He perches one hand on the bed, holding a black candle directly above my stomach.

But he knows—both of them know—I like the pain.

So this can’t be the punishment, either.

Killian walks over behind Carter, reaches for a black and gold bottle on the bed, opens it and squirts lube on his palm.

“This is how it’s going to go.” Killian strokes his large, throbbing cock, getting it wet for Carter’s ass. “I’m going to fuck Carter. Touch Carter. Make Carter scream and moan.”

Carter twists to Killian while fisting himself. Killian, unable to resist Carter’s silent invitation, curls his fingers around Carter’s throat and pulls him in for one of the hungriest, sexiest kisses I’ve ever seen.

Their tongues and teeth are at war, growls leaving their chests.

By the time they break their kiss, I’m a mess. My pussy clenches on air. No air reaches my lungs. Every nerve ending in my body has come to life at watching how passionate these two dominant men are for each other.

“Please.” I thrash against my binds. “I’m so hot. Please, I need you.”

Carter’s laugh is dark and low. His expression is wicked as he turns to inspect me.

“You’ll have us…” Killian flattens his palm on Carter’s back, bending him lower and lower until Carter’s forearms rest on the bed between my spread legs. “When we decide you’ve earned it.”

“Until then…” Carter’s mouth is inches from my pussy, and I can practically feel him. “Watching us is the only thing we’ll allow.”

“You threatened to deny us time with you.” Killian pours more lube on Carter’s ass, rubbing it around the rim. “We’re denying you of us.”

From this angle, I have a clear view of Killian’s fingers. How he pushes a thumb into Carter’s asshole, then another. Carter moans at the pleasure Killian gives him, and I lower my gaze to his face. His lips are swollen from Killian’s violent kiss. Parted as moans and grunts escape them.

“That feels so good.” Carter’s fingers sink into the sheets covering the bed, his brow furling. “Fuck, Killian, put your cock in me. I need you.”

“Not fair,” I complain, baring my teeth to them. “I want you too.”

“You’ll have us.” Killian pulls his fingers from Carter’s asshole, placing the head of his cock at the entrance instead. “When we’re done punishing you.”

“Please.” My moan gets drowned out by Carter’s loud gasp.

Looking to where their bodies connect, I see Killian push the head of his cock in.

“Fuck,” Carter hisses.

His biceps flex as he adjusts to Killian’s girth. What a sweet pain it must be. I love Killian’s cock in my ass.

“Look at him, pet,” Carter groans. “Look at Killian when he’s taking my ass.”

The torture of not being touched hurts so bad, but I do as he says. Killian spreads Carter’s ass cheeks, thrusting forward. His entire length disappears into Carter, and both men make loud and feral sounds when Killian starts fucking Carter.

“That’s it,” Killian goads Carter, slamming into him. “Take it. Take every inch of me.”

“More. Fuck, I need more.” Carter grabs the sheets to stop from swaying back and forth with each stroke of Killian’s cock.

“That’s what you want?” Killian’s harsh and relentless, like he’s trying to split Carter in half.

“Yes.” Carter twists the sheets between his fingers.

Killian reaches underneath him. Rewarding him by the look of it. Fucking Carter’s cock with his hand.

The erotic sight in front of me spreads fire through my body. Hotter than hell. Burning and destroying every inch of me.

Each of these men is beautiful on his own, but together, they’re something more. They fuck hard and fast. Their muscles work as one takes and the other gives. And the sounds that come out of them and of skin slapping on skin is too much to bear.

They’re not perfect. They’re something more.

So. Much. More.

“I’m going to come.” My orgasm is suffocating. It’s everywhere. Just from watching them together. “I can’t hold it. I’m sorry. I can’t.”

Killian’s expression softens. He pulls out of Carter, and Carter crawls up to me, to the aching spot between my legs.

“I’m sorry,” I grind out, trying to rein it in.

“Don’t be. You’ve been such a good girl.” Carter’s fingers dig into my thighs, his thumbs pulling my pussy lips apart. His mouth lowers to my hot sex, his breath fluttering on my skin when he says, “Torture time is over. I’m going to eat you out, and you’re going to come on my tongue, A. Come for us.”

Killian walks off somewhere, and then I hear the sound of water running behind me. I can’t bring myself to care what he’s doing there. Carter’s

mouth is on me. He sucks and licks and nips at my clit. Shoves three fingers inside me, spearing me, fucking me. Ruining me in the sweetest way imaginable.

It doesn't take long for my orgasm to detonate in my body. One electric shock after the other pulses through me as Carter draws out more of my climax out of me.

While I'm still shaking and trembling, I sense Killian's presence at my back. He undoes the binds on my wrists, and Carter takes his cue, doing the same for my ankles.

When he's done, Carter stands and waits. His cock stands proud, precum trickling on his piercing, on the swollen head.

"Now that you've been punished," Killian grits out, lust and desire soaking his words. "It's time to go through with this fantasy. My fantasy."

I search and find him at the edge of the bed. His large hands curl over my arms, and he drags me to him until my head hangs off the tall bed. His dick smells clean as he slaps my lips with it, and my mouth waters for him.

So that's what he was doing over there. Cleaning up.

"One where I fuck A's tight cunt?" Carter slides his cock over my wetness, sending another dizzying wave of arousal through me.

"Yes." Killian pulls on my top lip, forcing my mouth to open for him. "One where I fuck her pretty little mouth while you're inside her."

My fingers reach Killian's muscular thighs, and I grip them. "Do it."

Killian thrusts his cock into my mouth the same time Carter buries himself all the way inside my pussy. I close my eyes when Killian starts thrusting into my mouth. I hate that I can't see anything. Them fucking me. Them bruising me with their fingers. The pleasure on their expressions.

But it's okay. It's okay because I feel them. I hear them. These men run through my veins.

"Such a good girl," Killian groans. I gag on his girth, drool dripping down my face, and yet he keeps going. "Jesus, I could fuck the two of you forever and it still won't be enough."

"Amara, I'm fucking losing it." Carter's thumb presses and rubs my clit. "Watching your lips wrapped around his cock. Your spit on his dick. Fuck."

"She sucks me so good." Killian's cock swells in my mouth. "I'm not going to last."

At Killian's words, Carter pinches my clit, twisting it without a shred of mercy. More stars and fireworks explode behind my eyes as another soul-

shattering orgasm takes over me. I clench and scream on the two men. And they give me exactly the thing I need, emptying themselves inside me.

When they soften, each man is careful as they remove themselves from me.

“We don’t have a bath here.” Killian carries me across the room, while Carter comes to his side, kissing Killian’s shoulder, then my feet. “But we have a shower. Think that’s going to work for your aftercare, beautiful girl?”

“If it works for Carter.” My eyes are droopy, but somehow, I manage to keep them open and look at both men. “He deserves aftercare too.”

“He does.” Killian smirks.

Carter runs the hot water and the two men kiss. Then Killian puts me down. Carter curls his fingers around my neck, dragging me to him. To them.

Under the hot water stream, we kiss and kiss and kiss.

I don’t think about my shop while we do. Don’t think about secrets or half-truths.

I think about love and connection and fate.

I think about us until my brain is mush and I can’t think of anything anymore.

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CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

Killian

"We're five minutes away." Carter's eyes are on the touchscreen of my Bentley. "Turn right at the next corner."

"I see where we are just fine, Carter." I regret my outburst as soon as the words leave my mouth.

We've been driving past Central Park, luxury stores, the American Museum of Natural History. The Upper West Side of Manhattan is beautiful. The greenery and townhouses have a calming effect on my soul. It's clean, neat, organized.

Amara's parents don't deserve to live in this beautiful, peaceful area. Don't deserve to smile.

To breathe.

We won't murder them today. We'll rob them of their peace, though. Of their sense of security.

Once we're finished, their lives will be as miserable as they are. They'll always be on the lookout. Always worry about someone creeping into their penthouse.

They'll worry every second of every day.

Like Amara worried about her shop and apartment being taken from her. Like she does now.

Carter's cheerful humming sobers some of my anger. Makes me aware about the fact I've been an asshole.

"Sorry, you didn't deserve that." My eyes dart between his face, the Glock in his lap and his face again. "I just hate these fuckers."

“Same. Don’t worry about it.”

I’m packing the same Glock. Fucking hate the thing. Means we’ll be going easy on her parents when I wish we could do worse.

When going face-to-face against someone, I prefer using my fists or letting Carter have at them. Both options are far more effective than guns. Pain, humiliation, and scars last better. It ingrains Carter’s and my faces in their memory and skin.

Not to mention they’re far more satisfying.

But it takes time. And that’s what gets me—we don’t have time for that today. Today, we need fast results. Go in and out undetected and back to our Amara.

We would’ve gone from the hotel to her directly, except then, we wouldn’t have been able to get her this gift.

Some people buy their loved ones a bouquet of flowers. Chocolates. Jewelry.

We’re buying her the building from her parents.

A surprise we’ll present her with at exactly the right moment. Which isn’t today.

The thought of her face when we tell her is a balm to my simmering anger.

A smile teases my lips, and I repeat, “Again, I’m sorry. Shouldn’t have lashed out on you.”

“And I said don’t worry about it.” Carter shrugs, relaxing in his seat. “I’m on edge too.”

I chance a glance at him, watching his large hand running through his hair.

A hand that fisted my cock this morning, getting me hard before both he and Amara climbed on me. I flipped her on her back, took her ass while Carter fed me his cock.

He smirks, reading my heated expression.

“I know what you look like when you’re mad,” I huff, turning my eyes back to the road. “This isn’t it.”

“Oh, I am. But I’m saving myself for them.” In my periphery, I see him scrubbing his toned thighs. Now, I see the simmering anger. “Gonna give these fuckers the best version of myself.”

An old stone apartment building appears after I turn. I gaze up at the light on the top floor.

Her parents are there. At least that's what our detectives informed us, and they're never wrong. These fuckers are practically waiting for us. Comfortable and safe. They think these four walls and guard at the front mean nothing can hurt them.

Think again.

We stop at a parking garage on the same block as her parents' place, and I swerve the Bentley into a free space.

"Ever met them?"

"Amara's folks?" Carter barks an unamused laugh, flipping his Cyclone between his fingers. "Fuck no."

"Why?" I quirk an eyebrow, glancing at him and then back at the road.

"She's never offered," Carter says offhandedly.

"Hasn't she?" I slip it into the holster. Carter does the same.

We both get out of the car. Adrenaline thrums in my veins, but my hands don't shake one fucking bit when I button my suit jacket.

"No. I get why." Carter slams the door of the car. We're silent as we take the elevator to the street.

Once we're in the open air, he adds, "I lost it when she told me how they'd been treating her. Pinned her to the wall, fucked her ass. Bit her until she bled. Took out all my violent energy and made things better for her."

He says it as if we're having an everyday conversation. To the people in the street—those who don't hear him—it must look like one. Like we're two rich pricks talking business.

In a way, it is. Except I can't do what I want, which is put a hand on the small of his back. We never know who's watching us.

One day, I will. One day, I'll have both of them at my sides and I'll touch them out in the open however the fuck I want.

With security around us, granted.

Carter turns his gaze to me at the entrance of the apartment building. I don't move, and Carter's psycho smile stretches on his face.

Something vile is about to leave his mouth. I fucking smell it.

"Later," I warn.

"Amara had to have known I wouldn't have been able to be civil around those assholes." He chuckles, shaking his head. "She would've been right. It took me over a week to cool off after I heard her story. Barely. I'm still considering the option of peeling off their skin and sowing it into a dress for Amara."

A gray-haired woman who walks next to us gasps. Carter's smile widens. He's about to distress her further, and there's nothing I can do to stop him out here. Like fuck his lack of tact out of him.

Fortunately, she has the sense to look away and speed-walk on her heels.

"I'm punishing you for this." I move close so only he would hear me. We stand eye to eye, his sandalwood cologne carrying into my flared nostrils. "It'll be a surprise, and it'll hurt. I promise you that."

"What if I say *Cyclone*?" His safeword. He chose it. What fucking else?

I refused to touch either of them until he had one, right after the day we fucked Christopher up. I had every intention of exploring his limits. Thoroughly. Someday in the near future, he'll use it. Just a matter of time.

"Oh, you will?" I edge closer. "Will that be before or after you come so hard it takes Amara forever to lick every drop of your orgasm off your stomach?"

I'm not exaggerating. That actually happened over the last two days. Twice.

"No." He steps back. Sucks in a breath. Pushes his hair out of his eyes. "I won't."

My smirk widens. Carter, albeit rattled, smiles back.

"Enough with the games. We're here for her." Motioning to the wood and glass door behind the archway, I tell him, "Let's go."

"About time."

The building's lobby looks like it hasn't been renovated for decades, and yet everything seems brand new. The antique marble floors, tall ceilings, the carved wood sliding doors of the elevators. Old and pristine.

"We're here for the Carmichaels," I announce to the concierge.

The younger, built man's brown eyes linger on us. I bet he doubles as their security. He takes note of the tailor-made suits. Our expensive haircuts. Deems us worthy to even step inside the building.

"Your names?"

"You won't find us on the guest list." Carter steps closer to the concierge's stand. "We're, what you might call, unannounced. But we're supposed to be here, so…" Carter leans in, reading the gold plate tag on the hefty man's jacket. "Porter. Let's not waste anyone's time. You're going to buzz us in."

"I don't know who you think you are." Porter's lip curls in a snarl, his chest puffed. "The answer is no. I'm going to have to ask you two to leave

the premises.”

“Is that an order?” I unbutton my suit jacket, tugging it to the side.

The man’s brows scrunch together as he catches a glimpse of my Glock. He rises to his full height, his eyes narrowing.

Wraps his meaty fingers around the taser in his holster. As if that’s going to scare us off—the people who are packing guns.

“For real?” Of course, Carter would find our situation entertaining. Of course, he’d chuckle. “You’re threatening us with that?”

“I’m just getting started, asshole,” Porter pulls the taser out. “Try me. You’ll lose.”

“Lose in fucking what?” Carter barks out another laugh, slamming his hand on top of Porter’s desk. Before the latter has a chance to answer, Carter whips his head to me, his gray eyes glinting. “Afraid of a little electricity, Kill?”

“Nah.” My hand finds the Glock. My thumb glides along the curve of the trigger. “He’s going to have to do a little better than that.”

“Much.” Carter swivels his head back to the front desk, slowly, ignoring how Porter starts rounding it. “Stay right where you are.”

Porter fails to listen, poor asshole. He comes to the front, aiming the buzzing taser on Carter. Carter, with his animal instincts, grabs Porter’s wrist. He slams the man’s hand on his own stand, then goes for his throat, dragging his back to where Porter stood a second ago.

I keep watch, though it’s not necessary. Carter shoves Porter’s face to the desk where no one will be able to see him.

There are struggle noises, then a, “Fuck you.”

Carter plucks Cyclone from his pocket for Porter to see, his way of playing with his new human toy.

“These rich fucks worth it?”

“Fuck—”

Carter slices a straight line on Porter’s cheek. Blood trickles to the wooden desk. “Say that again.”

“You’re a dead man.”

“That’s funny. You don’t seem to be in a position to be issuing threats.” Carter lifts his gaze to me. He makes a show of scrunching his eyebrows, pretending to look at me in confusion. “Am I missing something here?”

“No one threatens me and stays alive.” Porter squirms from beneath Carter.

“No one *will* threaten you. Since you’ll be dead and all.”

“Fuck you.”

“That again.” Carter rolls his eyes, sighing dramatically. “Ugh. He’s no fun. I’m bored. Can we go now, *Dad*?”

Brat.

He’s going to cry later. He’ll cry. He’ll weep. And I’ll lick each and every tear.

“A moment,” I say in a flat voice that doesn’t betray my devious plans.

“What?” Porter spits out.

“We won’t kill you.” Once I hover over the concierge’s stand, I glare at the squirming Porter. “Won’t kill them, either. As long as you let us through without alerting anyone. What will it be?”

“It’ll be a no.”

“Have it your way.” Carter is quick to lift his hand, curl his fingers into a fist, and land a punch into Porter’s cheek.

The sound of bones cracking has Carter wagging his eyebrows at me. I smile back because I can’t not smile at his playfulness.

Porter’s eyes roll in the back of his head, and he’s out. Fainted.

Carter winks, choking Porter just to make sure he’ll stay out. After that, he pushes Porter beneath the desk until there’s no sign the man’s ever been here.

“He should be out for the next ten minutes. Fifteen tops.” Carter shoves his knife into the back pocket of his pants. “Let’s make them count.”

We head to the elevators. I punch the code we extracted from Amara’s phone while she was sleeping. There’s no tension between Carter and me on the way up. Just a sense of readiness. Righteousness. Eagerness to pounce.

We’re two predators. Two protectors.

Two killers, if that’s what it’ll take.

Ding.

The elevator doors to Amara’s family penthouse open.

“Melina, honey, is that you?” A woman calls, the barest hint of affection slithering into her voice. “You’re here early. What a pleasant surprise.”

Must be her mom. I imagine Amara has never been on the receiving end of the woman’s affection. A new wave of wrath ripples through me. Bleeding from my every pore. Carter’s at my side, the same hatred pouring from him too.

We prowl forward from the foyer as I hear her heels clicking in our direction.

“Melina?” The woman I assume to be Elora Carmichael appears in the hallway.

It takes me a second to look her over. Blond hair and brown eyes that look so much like Amara’s, though that’s where their similarities end. Where Amara is a ray of sunshine, her mother is cold and detached. Beautiful in her thousand-dollar cream pantsuit and matching heels, but cold.

I see the moment she realizes the two men in black suits in her home are intruders.

“Ahh!” she screams, her howl pathetic as fuck. “Case! Come here! Help!”

With us here, threatening them, their money means shit. The high ceilings, the pristine white sofas, the furniture that no doubt cost a fortune, the solid hardwood floors. None of it will help them.

Elora’s quivering chin and angry tears tell us she motherfucking knows her fate is in our hands.

More pathetic shrills ensue. Trembling legs. Wide, terrified eyes.

Nothing like our feral Amara.

Amara would’ve charged at us. Would’ve faced us without batting an eye. She did it before. I have no doubt she would’ve done it again.

“Elora, what in the world is the fuss abo—” Her husband’s angry march comes to a halt three feet behind his wife.

At five-foot-five, the thin man is even less of a threat to us than his wife. His banana-yellow polo shirt and cream-colored pants make him look soft. Scared. Fragile.

Someone who either Carter or me could easily crunch beneath our boot.

And laugh while we do it.

“Thank you, sweetheart,” Carter drawls, aiming his unsettling smile at Elora. “How’d you guess we’d be needing him here?”

They’re silent when he takes a step forward. Carter flips the knife in his hand, high up for Amara’s parents to catch the movement. They fixate on the blade gleaming beneath the overhead lights. Watching the crimson stain Porter left on the tip.

I get hard just from witnessing these assholes’ horror.

“Who are you people?” Case stammers, sidling next to his wife.

Next to her. Not in front of his wife. Not protecting her.

What a goddamn embarrassment.

Carter, ever the psycho, whistles instead of giving them an answer.

“Less than ten minutes,” he reminds me.

“Ten minutes to what?” Case whispers.

“We’re the men who are going to take your building from you.” I don’t beat around the bush. Don’t feel inclined for niceties or being civil with these assholes. “Today.”

“What? This building?” Case has the audacity to act confused. “We own this penthouse, but the rest of the building belongs to—”

“Can you believe these fuckers?” Carter’s psycho smile is aimed at me now. He’s anything but amused, though. A barely contained rage glimmers in his eyes, threatening to detonate any moment. “Next thing you know, they’ll be asking us who Amara is.”

“Amara?” Her mother’s terrified posture changes. She stands taller. Spine erect, hands balled into fists. Cheeks red with annoyance. “What does *she* have to do with anything?”

“So you do remember that part.” Any trace of humor I had in me dries right the fuck up. “Now let’s drop the dumb act and talk about the shop and apartment she’s been renting from you.”

“The one on the Lower East Side.” Carter stalks over to them, grabs Case by the back of his head, and pins the blade of his knife to his throat. Elora moves to jump Carter. He catches the movement, releasing Case to grab her delicate throat with ease. “As of this moment, it’s ours. Where do we sign?”

Case’s throat bobs. I hear his heartbeat the closer I get. Smell the stink of his sweat. And yet I don’t hear him utter a single word.

He doesn’t threaten us to leave his wife alone or anything else.

Not a peep.

Coward.

“Well?” Carter shakes Elora.

“W-what makes you think we’ll give it to you for free?”

I guess he does have something to say. Too bad we’re getting Amara her shop as a surprise. She would’ve smiled so pretty watching her dipshit father squirm.

“Excuse me?” Carter throws Elora on the floor, using his now free hand to grip Case’s shirt collar. “Was that a no, grandpa?”

He presses the edge of the blade to Case’s skin and nicks it. Blood trickles down to the collar of his polo. He cries out.

Elora finds her courage a second time. She scrambles to her feet, her heels scratching the marble floors. Then she launches herself at Carter.

I’m impressed. She has more balls than her husband does.

I’m also really fucking furious. No one touches Carter.

My stepson. One of my lovers.

“Elora.” I cock my gun, the sound loud in the penthouse. “One wrong move and your brain will be splattered all over your Monet.”

“Do try and tackle me,” Carter addresses her while his eyes are still fixed on Case. “I’d love hanging that one up at home. I’d call it, The Bloody Lilies. A wonderful memory of a wonderful day.”

Elora backs off, turning on the waterworks.

I don’t care. I’ve done way worse to both women and men alike. Would’ve done worse to her had she not been Amara’s mom. There’s no telling how Amara will react to us killing her parents. Or to us killing, period.

I know I told Carter to fess up to her, but I definitely lose sleep over this.

Later.

Case stops crying, lifting chin and cringes when Carter’s knife runs along the broken skin. “You’re not getting it for free. We already have a—”

“Free. F-R-E-E. Now, let me tell you why.” Defending Amara’s honor has me talking more than I should. I keep going anyway. “For four years, you’ve taken rent from your daughter and have threatened her at every turn. Treating her as if she were another lowlife inhibiting this city. As if that isn’t enough, you’ve demeaned her for doing what she loves. For being the person she is. Giving her the building in its entirety is the least you can do to make it up to her. And that’s exactly what you’re going to do.”

“We already have a b-b-buyer.” Her dad pinches his lips. Carter cuts him deeper.

“Goddammit.” Losing to us annoys Case. Much more than the new blood trickling from his neck.

Tough luck, both Carter and I hate losing more.

Carter moves the tip of the blade to Case’s chin. A cut he wouldn’t be able to hide around his stuck-up friends.

That’s what gets to him. “Fine, fine. I’ll hand it over.”

“Good dog.” Carter pats his head. “I’ll ask again. Where do we sign?”

“I’ll call my lawyer.” Case seethes. “Why do you care, anyway? What’s your relationship with Amara?”

We don’t owe them explanations. We don’t owe them shit. But staying silent will raise red flags. It’ll have them digging.

“She’s one of our suppliers. We really love her flowers.” I jerk my head to the elevator doors, signaling to Carter that playtime is over. “Our lawyers will call yours.”

Carter wipes his fingertip along the blood trail on Case’s throat.

“We’ll find their number. We have our resources. And in case you fail to take their calls…” He smears crimson stipes on Case’s nose, chin. Beneath his eyes. “We’ll be back here. You’ll be wise to avoid that, Casey boy. Real motherfucking smart.”

“We were never here,” I add, glaring at her parents. “You mention it to her or anyone else, both you and your beloved Melina are fish food.”

“Bloop,” Carter says, pushing Case to the floor.

And that’s how we met our in-laws.

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CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

Amara

"Pretty, pretty ladies," I greet the black dahlias in my shop, removing a shriveled petal carefully.

I'm happy. Excited as I'm helping Opal rearrange Luna's bouquet for tomorrow's wedding.

Her denim overalls and a striped, black and white T-shirt were far less rumpled a few hours ago, as in this morning. Before she decided she had to trim and fix Luna's flower arrangements one last time.

I don't know what possessed her to leave me in charge of the bouquet, but she did.

So here I am.

"They really are." Opal smiles at me from her place on the floor, then returns to arrange the perfectly arranged flowers.

"Thanks to you."

She doesn't respond, just makes a *snip, snip, snip* sound in the small shop with her scissors.

So I return to daydreaming about my men.

About the two weeks we've been together. How they removed any shred of my anxiety over losing the shop and replaced it with their dark brand of love and endless devotion.

Fourteen days have passed. I've been sleeping with them in the same bed every night. Have been waking up to their scent, hands, and warm bodies every morning.

This morning was no different.

Killian’s mouth on my pussy stirred me out of a dream.

I recognized his mouth with my eyes closed.

Carter’s lips were harsh, his teeth always so aggressive. I’d usually wake up screaming when he’d go down on me in my sleep. Either that, or I’d open my eyes to his thick cock choking me.

Killian’s lips were as demanding. His mouth sucked my clit hard. The way the man used his tongue, though, was more reverent. Like he was worshipping me.

He fingered me differently, too. Killian would demand my pussy yield to him. Curled his fingers inside me, rubbed me until I screamed.

Carter’s fingers would plunge into me, threaten me to finish or else…

I loved both. They were two pieces of the same puzzle. Two parts of a whole.

My eyes fluttered open to Killian’s brown ones. Their color reminded me of dark chocolate this morning. Rich. Delicious. Dark and tempting. Growing darker when I moaned his name.

“There she is.” Carter’s hoarse voice came from my right. “Our Amara.”

Reflexively, my head spun toward him.

Gray eyes gazed at me. Probed inside my brain. Reached deep into my soul and latched onto my heart. The beating organ in my chest that belonged to these two men thudded and hopped.

“You were dripping in your sleep.” Killian hooked my leg over his shoulder. “I’m ravenous for you.”

His hot words on my wet clit flipped a switch on in me. I became an animal. My back arched. My fingernails sunk into the covers. Moaning was my only intelligible response.

He shot me one of his rare smirks. The twinkle in his eyes was the one he’d saved just for us. Then he dove back in, his tongue assaulting my clit.

“You taste like fucking heaven,” Carter said between painful bites on my nipple.

I cursed and groaned in pain when he tugged on my nipple ring with his teeth.

“Watching him eat you out? I need you, pet.” Carter’s hand slipped to his heavy cock. “Goddamn famished.”

He jerked himself while Killian feasted on my pussy.

Killian wasn’t taken care of. Carter only had his hand to pleasure him.

That wasn’t right.

We were together. Coming together. Me touching them, them bringing each other to an orgasm. All of us as one. Even if they loved spoiling me, I wanted more.

"Come up here." My lust was as thick as molasses. But I managed to talk. Somehow. "Your cocks, I need them here."

"What's that?" Killian sat up on his knees, his tongue wiping my arousal off his bottom lip. "Are you ordering us?"

The tattoos on his toned arms hypnotized me. Roses and skulls traced along his muscles. Brought to life by his flexing muscles. Sexy. So incredibly sexy. My brain turned into mush at the sight.

"Bad girl, A." Carter slapped my pussy as punishment for staying silent and ogling both of them. His smirk told me how much he enjoyed my scream. "You do what you're *told."*

"Damn right."

I shrieked when they manhandled me to my side, giggles bursting from my throat.

My laugh was short-lived, though, cut off by Carter's cock shoved into my open mouth. He was facing my feet, feeding me his cock one thrust at a time. Killian returned to eating me out, lying so the three of us created a triangular shape.

Meaning his cock was in Carter's face. So Carter sucked on Killian, making Killian groan into my pussy.

They were brutal with each other, but more so with me. Carter pounded into my mouth. Killian gripped my flesh and bit my clit.

I thrived on the pain. Always had. But in the past two weeks, I craved it. Had been a starved woman, and they fed me one torture after the other.

Where there was pain, no threats were hanging over my head. No broken dreams. No looking for a new place for my precious flowers. No parents telling me they wish I'd never been born.

We created a perfect world together.

Our bodies writhed together. Hips bucking. Mouths sucking, tongues licking.

A triangle of unapologetic, blinding lust and…love. Yes, love.

Lots of cum too.

"Earth to Amara." Opal waved her hand in my face.

Heat flushed from my neck to my cheeks. Both Carter *and* Killian mentioned I'd been talking in my sleep. Things would get really, terribly

awkward if that's why Opal is looking at me with her head cocked.

"Uh…" My eyes dart away from hers, doing a quick scan of the shop. No customers. Phew. I'm cautious when I slide my gaze back to Opal. "Sorry, I guess I was daydreaming."

"Daydreaming about destroying these pricey black dahlias?" She pushes her glasses up her nose, eyeing the bouquet in my hands. "The special delivery we made for Luna's wedding? That didn't need much fixing other than plucking a few crumpled petals?"

My head shakes slowly. I refuse to look down. "Tell me you didn't kill them."

Ruining Luna's bouquet is far worse than mumbling things in my sleep like *Let me see you two rubbing each other's dicks together*.

Far worse.

This wedding is a huge deal for me. First, I love Luna. She's always kind to me.

Second, it's a huge opportunity for my shop to reach more clients. Voltage's members are filthy rich.

So what if some of them were shady? I wasn't going to marry them. I needed their business. More events equaled more money, more cash flow to give Opal the raise she deserves for the love she puts into our arrangements.

Finding a new location for my shop wouldn't be as daunting if my budget wasn't as limited as it is today.

All those weekends off I took recently come back to haunt me, and I sigh. Never mind. I'll worry about that later.

What matters now is assessing the damage to the bouquet.

Then to ask Carter and Killian to park my plants in the penthouse for a little while.

"Opal?" I pull my lips in, consumed by dread. "Please tell me I didn't fuck up her special day and this order. *Please*."

"Well." Opal pries my fingers off the bouquet and inspects it. "A little less petals than I would've liked—"

Opal flinches at my scream. I can't look anywhere but her scrunched mouth, still unable to peek at the damage I've caused. On the flower-slaughter I committed.

Luna's bridal bouquet is ruined.

There's no time to fix it or order new flowers for tomorrow. No time. No time. No time.

“I—What—Fuck!”

“—on this *one* particular dahlia,” Opal finishes her sentence in a whisper.

One flower. Just one.

At the slowest speed known to mankind, I slide my gaze to Luna’s bouquet.

“It’s okay, Amara,” she adds while I check out the flower she was talking about.

Poor thing. But it’s fixable.

“Little baldie.” My fingers skirt along its remaining petals and down the stem. “You barely survived my assault. Say thank you to Auntie Opal for saving your life.”

I grab the bouquet from the bottom, tilting it toward her as if the flower could actually thank her. She raises an eyebrow at me and that’s it. Doesn’t call me a freak.

We both are. We both accept one another, which is so rare for me.

So wonderful.

“I know what to do.” Opal sidesteps me and moves to stand at my side behind the counter. She shoots me the shortest wink known to mankind before placing the bouquet in a vase. “Auntie Opal will patch you right up.”

A giggle escapes me and I blow her a kiss she doesn’t catch. She’s too busy working her magic. Moving the flowers from here to there, blending the wounded dahlia into her healthier sisters.

“There it is,” Opal announces. “Perfectly imperfect.”

“Thank you, Opal.” I gesture to the rest of tomorrow’s order that covers every available square inch of the floor. “For this. And the rest of the arrangements.”

“Just doing my job.” At the last word, creases appear on her forehead. She shifts her gaze to the bouquet. “Speaking of… Any news from your parents?”

The million-dollar question.

They haven’t spoken to me for the past two weeks. No note of eviction has been taped to the front door. I haven’t received a call from their lawyer telling me to pack the fuck up. When I searched for the sale listing a week ago—the one I saw a day after their announcement—it wasn’t there.

They haven’t listed it on any other site, either.

I can ask them what’s going on. If not for myself, I owe that to Opal. And yet, I haven’t picked up the phone and called them.

I’m too busy working and scouring other available places in the area like crazy. I choose to focus on the positive. I have to.

Something has to turn up.

Until then…

“I haven’t found another place. But we’re not being evicted in the meanwhile.” My lips twist, a million emotions swirling in my heart. “I know it’s unfair to ask you to stay while all I have to offer is hope. I won’t.” Carter and his possessiveness come to mind, and I repeat one of the things he said to me. “I wish I could handcuff you behind the counter. Keep you with me. Except it’s illegal.”

Her nose scrunches. Then she smiles. “That’s a bit extreme.”

“Yup.” I shrug. I am extreme. Denying it is futile. “I’ll go to prison, and I like my freedom. So I won’t do that.”

“I’ll be kinda pissed off, too.” Trust a weirdo like Opal to be okay with my crazy shit.

“Yeah, you probably would,” I concede. “So, to answer your question, I don’t know.”

“Hope is fine. No need to chain me here.” She runs her fingers along the counter, collecting an errant, shriveled petal, and throws it into the trash. “I’m staying. I have my savings. I won’t starve between the time your parents kick us out and when we settle into the new place. Whenever it might be.”

Tears well in my eyes. “I like you.”

“And I…like working here.”

She’s uncomfortable, but she likes me right back.

I don’t press her on it. I do send her home early, though. She’s been fretting over these flower arrangements for a week now, staying late nights to make sure they’re exactly what she envisioned them to be.

I’m more than happy to be the one closing up.

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CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

Amara

"My cute, adorable roses." My lips brush along the soft white petals. "Mama's going to be back first thing in the morning."

More flower-talking. I know, I know. But they're my children. I love them as if they were cute little newborns without the crying and pooping part.

Perfect.

I do one last sweep of my shop. The flowers are ready for the freelance delivery guy I hired to drive them to Luna and Julien's wedding tomorrow. It's a big order that won't fit in my truck, and though it breaks my heart, the guy's reliable.

Besides, I'll be there to help set them in exactly the right place. I insisted.

I'll set the flowers and leave.

I'm not a guest for obvious reasons, which was kind of depressing but understandable. The thing we have outweighs any PDA we're avoiding like the plague.

We'll kiss in public, one day.

I'm in no hurry.

I think.

"Sleep tight, babies." I wave at each one of them as a final goodbye for the night. "You have a big day waiting for you tomorrow."

Next on my list is to lock up and walk home. Stretch my legs. Breathe.

Which neither of my men would approve.

I've been trying to be a good girl. Each evening, I called them when it's time to head home. Carter has never been late, not once. Killian always arrives early.

They're still on edge even though no one's tried to attack me since the asshole. I've been searching for him. For anyone suspicious. There's been none. Not even the strange man Opal told me about two weeks ago.

It's time to spread my wings and fly. I'm not some caged animal.

My mom might be fulfilled with her role as Dad's flashy doll that smiles and says the right thing at the right time. She loves being his aging and yet functioning pony, and he likes parading her around.

I couldn't and wouldn't be trained.

My relationship will never be like my parents.

Resolve wraps itself around my chest, fueling me to do what's right by *me*. I'm walking to our apartment alone.

A-fucking-alone.

I switch off the lights in the shop, leaving the back one on. Just in case one of my flowers has nightmares and I won't be here to console them. They need it. I don't care that it's a waste of money.

Next, I count the money in the till, locking it up.

Last but not least, I lock the place up. Normally, I would've double-checked the lock on the back door. Today, I don't have to. It hasn't been opened since yesterday, and I haven't gone out on any deliveries.

Time to head home.

My hand reaches for the front pocket of my white dandelion-patterned dress. My fingers close around my shop keys. I'm ready to go out the front door.

Except I don't make it past the counter. I'm frozen as the air in the shop shifts.

The hair at my nape stands on end.

I'm not alone.

Someone entered through the back door.

I don't see the person behind me. Didn't hear him enter. I didn't smell him over the strong fragrance of my flowers.

Nevertheless, he's here.

A burglar.

Hoping he won't notice my movement, I tuck my key between my ring and middle finger. With enough force, my makeshift weapon will slide right

into his eyeball. It might go deep.

As in brain deep.

I'll have to change my keys after the police confiscate my pair as evidence.

Worth it.

I suck in a deep breath. The asshole remains quiet. Thinks he's intimidating me by hovering around like a fucking predator.

He's messed with the wrong woman.

A war cry rises from my lungs. I spin, wielding my weapon in the air, preparing to strike. My adrenaline-pumped brain blocks me from seeing the man's face.

The only thing I notice is that his hair is black instead of blond.

He dyed it. Conniving asshole.

"Pet."

Did he just call me *Pet*?

How dare he.

The stolen nickname fuels the fire in me. I hurl myself forward, the blood in my veins on fire, my bicep pulsing. I'm about to poke his eyeball right out of its socket. Eliminate the threat once and for all.

"Fucking wild animal." The man grips my raised wrist with one hand, enveloping my back with his free hand. Forcing me to his chest. "Fucking hot animal."

Is it sandalwood I'm smelling?

I blink, clearing my foggy vision. "Muffin?"

"Amara." He pins me to his cock that pulses against my belly. Almost spearing me through our clothes. "Who else would get this hard when his girlfriend is about to take out one of his eyeballs?"

"Killian." I giggle.

"Yeah." He smiles wide. "He would."

There are questions I should be asking Carter instead of melting into him. Like how he got in. Or how he knew I was about to close up now and not later.

None of them seems important at the moment.

All I care about is his thick cock grinding against me. How he's one of the two most handsome men I've ever seen.

I sneak my free hand between us, cradling his stubbled cheek. Smiling.

“You know, if eyes were replaceable, I would’ve let you rip mine out.” His lips lower to mine. Instead of kissing me, he sinks them into my bottom lip. A hungry animal eager to tear his prey’s flesh. “You make me go feral, Amara. Make me lose my mind.”

Carter kisses me up my throat, nipping at my jaw. His hand cups the underside of my breast, his thumb brushing my pierced nipple beneath my bra.

My hand releases its death grip on the key, and it clatters as it falls to the counter, then slides to the floor. My leg hikes up Carter’s leg. But our third is missing. And besides, I have questions.

“What”—my God, I have to talk before I spontaneously combust—“are you doing here?”

“Taking you home.” His lips ghost down my neck. Soft. Unlike his hips that push me against the counter. Or his hands that hauls my ass on it. “What does it look like? Making sure you’re not walking home alone.”

“How did you get in?”

“Stole your keys.” His fingers bite into my ass, yanking me to his dick. “Duplicated them while you slept.”

“And…stop. Stop.” I shove against his chest. “Killian’s not here.”

I’d love nothing more than to be impaled by his cock. Be pounded in my shop before my parents sell it to someone else. But absolutely not just the two of us alone.

“Kill got caught up in a conference call. He’s at the hotel’s office.” Carter’s tongue ghosts over my ear, making me shiver. “He can be here, sort of. He can watch us.”

“H-how?” I’m panting, helpless against the relentless grind of Carter’s hips.

“Cameras.” He pinches my pierced nipple through my dress, his other hand digging into the flesh of my ass. “We had them installed two weeks ago.”

“What?” I gape at him, incredulous and flattered that they’d go to these lengths to spy on me. For my safety and who knows what else. Hopefully, they’ve done dirty things while they watched. I know I told Killian I’m forbidding him from installing these cameras and stalking me. Thing is, I don’t care anymore. Because this isn’t about them being controlling asses. This feels depraved and kinky. I like it. Very, very much. “You hacked into my security cameras?”

“Such a clever one, pet.” His cock rubs against my clit, and I bite my bottom lip. “It would’ve been a lot easier than installing new ones.”

Carter kisses the tip of my nose. There’s nothing condescending about him. He adores me. He shows it through his actions, and I melt into him.

“When did you install new ones?”

“We had to distract you with multiple orgasms and fill your holes while we had our men working here.”

Again, I should feel violated. Wronged, even. I specifically told them not to do it.

I’m neither of these.

I’m obsessed with these men. I want them crawling beneath my skin. I crave to sneak under theirs. Flow in their veins and get high on their blood.

Why did I even say no in the first place?

Carter growls, ripping himself away from me. “Killian.”

“That’s when you had it done?” My sex tingles, and I spin on the counter to watch him pacing the shop. “The night my cameras here were down?”

“Correct, A.” Carter pulls down the blinds I usually leave up. “We installed them here”—he points out to the large clay vase I haven’t moved since I opened the shop—“here, here, and there.”

The heat between my thighs spreads out to the rest of me. A vine latches on to my body.

“You’ve been watching me this whole time?” My voice sounds like I just choked on cotton candy. Thick and somewhat sweet. I’m so happy I could cry. “Both of you?”

“Yup. Have been looking out for you. Checking up on you.” His mesmerizing smile—the one that has the hotel staff cringing—curves up his lips. He prowls toward me, shrugging off his jacket. “Remember two nights ago? When I called you saying I missed your pretty pussy. In the middle of a business meeting I had with Killian.”

“I do.” I gulp, my arousal spreading through me like wildfire. “You asked my permission for you two to jerk off together. I could barely function after that, thinking about the two of you like that.”

“I know.” I’m drawn to the sexy way Carter rolls up his sleeves. Loosens his tie. “We were watching you. Had the live stream from your shop. That’s what we jerked off to. Came so hard I saw stars. Kill made a whole fucking mess.”

My hand slides to the soaking apex between my thighs.

“Bad girl.” Carter rounds the counter, curls his fingers around my wrist, and presses it to my lower back. He jerks his head to somewhere behind his back. “The last camera we installed, it’s there.”

I pull on his tie, dragging him to me. Our mouths press to one another. Our eyes twinkle in the faint light of the shop.

He adjusts one of his AirPods in his ear. “You ready?”

“Where’s mine?” I reach for the pocket of his pants where he pulled the first bud from.

His hand slams on mine faster than I can say Flamingo Flower. Indignance has my lips curving into a pout.

His eyes narrow, his thumb rubbing along my palm. “We’re going to play a game. You, me, and him.”

“What game?” My heart aches less at this. In fact, it tingles. “I like games.”

“I know you do, A. And you’re going to love this one.” His lips coast on the O-shaped scar on my shoulder, his hands moving to my hips. “I’ll be on the phone with Kill, and he’ll order us around. Tell us what kind of show would make his dick so hard he jacks off at the office.”

A growl escapes me, and my fingernails scratch at Carter’s neck. The thought alone turns me into a wild animal.

“Just you and me, baby.” Carter eyes the closest camera to the counter. “And him.”

“No holding back,” I whisper.

He shakes his head, his fingers biting into my ass and pulling closer.

“Then do it.” My legs spread for him and Killian, offering myself. “Call Daddy.”

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CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

Killian

My video call will start any minute now.

And I'm in my office. By myself. Carter went to pick Amara up, and I stayed behind at Voltage, tying up loose ends.

Same assholes we dealt with over Christmas. Macy, even from her home in Florida, still manages to piss Riggs and his boss the fuck off. Mediating their conflict isn't urgent, but it has to be done today.

Luna is getting married tomorrow, and I'll be damned if I let anyone stir shit on her…special day.

We can't afford to have any surprises. Nothing that will potentially ruin this for her.

After that, I get to go home.

To be with my people.

The thought alone eases my annoyance, a balm to my strained nerves. I lower into the leather chair behind the desk in our office, unbuttoning my suit jacket and firing up my laptop.

Bzz. Bzz. Bzz.

My phone.

Earlier this evening, I muted my notifications to any contact that wasn't Carter, Amara, or Luna.

I sent Luna home an hour ago to get her beauty sleep.

That only leaves Carter and Amara. They're supposed to be together by now.

Something's happened and I'm here instead of there.

My pulse spikes, rage clouds my vision. Anyone who dared lay a hand on either of them will pay with their lives.

I can't get my hand into my pocket fast enough. "Carter? What's going on?"

"Everything's fine." His voice is husky. Hungry. "We missed you."

"Hi, Killie," Amara adds, her voice muffled. "I've missed you all day today."

They both sound breathless, and my dick jerks in response.

"Really, really missed you." She ends the sentence in the background, and I think I hear a moan.

A fucking moan.

"Really, really, really," Carter grunts, low and feral, before I hear something thumping.

So this is what I walked into.

They're seconds from ripping each other's clothes off. And they called me. They could have fucked each other senseless and I wouldn't have known.

They didn't.

Yeah, Carter and I asked for Amara's permission the other day. This is different. In my head, it's still *their* relationship.

This evening, they're proving to me it isn't. It's ours.

Ours.

"I missed you too." I press my phone between my ear and shoulder, unbuckling my belt. Not giving a fuck that the clock's ticking. That my meeting is about to start. "You still at the shop?"

"Open the app and see for yourself." Carter's words get swallowed by another moan from Amara.

One of my eyebrows hikes up. "You know about the cameras?"

"She can't hear you," Carter murmurs. "He asked about the cameras."

"Yup. Couldn't care less." Her hum is a sweet, faraway echo. "I just want you. Open the cameras, Killian. Please."

She's pleading. After we invaded her privacy, she fucking begs for us.

Then I realize what's been bothering me. "Why can't Amara hear me?"

"Because…" Carter's voice hints to the answer. Amara doesn't have a bud so she won't listen in on the upcoming meeting. That's fucked and I resent having to withhold secrets from her, but I won't push Carter. "We're playing a game."

Heat spreads through me. Urgency, too. I drop my phone in my lap and put my AirPods in my ears. “Hold on.” I open the app on my phone and zoom in on the camera to Amara’s right.

Carter stands between Amara’s thighs. She’s seated on the counter, legs spread, hands raking his hair. He’s definitely hard, grinding into her. Dry humping our little flower girl.

The way her mouth is parted in pleasure, it’s evident he hits her just where she wants it. He’s got to be throbbing for her—for us. Thrusting into her warmth. She has to be soaking through her panties.

My own erection gets fucking uncomfortable. I don’t take myself out, instead fisting myself over my pants, biting back a groan.

“Kill, you’re quiet.” Carter’s attention splits between the cameras spread around and Amara. “You fucking your hand already?”

“I’m here.” I stroke myself, imagining both of them on their knees here. “Watching through the camera near the counter.”

Carter whispers what I said to Amara, and the two of them whip their heads to face me. The low light in Carnations isn’t much to go on, but it’ll do. I have every feature of these two ingrained inside my head, anyway. Every shadow, every curve and line. There to stay.

“Kinda figured out you’d go with that one.” Carter pushes down the strap of Amara’s dress. Eager as I am, he shoves the cup of her bra down, exposing her tit. “Almost like you’re here.”

“Oh, I’ll be with you,” I issue the threat that promises them both sex and violence. “Later, tonight. I’ll be every fucking where.”

“Killian.” Amara’s hair drapes down her back, her brown eyes twinkling in the dark.

She’s not being quiet, and I bet every sick fuck crossing the street can hear her. I can’t bring myself to care. So long as I hear her, I do not care.

“Tell us what you want us to do,” she begs. “Tell us so—”

Carter bends to her. His arm wraps around her back, arching her to him. He closes his mouth on her pierced nipple, the black strands of his hair grazing her chest.

The sucking and slurping sounds as she cries out go straight to my cock.

“Pull on her hair.” The last line is crossed. I take myself out in my office, jerking in slow movements. “Make it hurt.”

Carter tilts his head to the camera, shooting me a smirk before doing as I said. Amara cries out again, dragging Carter closer to her despite the pain.

Because of the pain.

“Little masochist.” I’m breathing hard, feeling as though I’m right there with them. “Let’s see how much more she can take.”

Carter repeats my words against her tit. She glances at the camera, licking her swollen bottom lip. Amara gets to fuck with my head for the whole of a second before Carter bites her. The sharp pain has her screaming, turning her on so bad that her thighs start moving on the counter.

I wish it could be enough. Especially since I’m running out of time.

It isn’t.

“Shove her dress up. All the way up to her waist.” He’s barely done when I bark out, “Tell her to pull you out.”

He does both. I finally have a view of her sexy lace panties. Carter’s cock is out too, heavy in her little palm. They’re starved. So am I.

My thumb rubs over the drop of precum when a notification pops on my laptop screen. Perfect timing. Motherfucking perfect.

Before I roll my eyes, an idea forms in my head.

“My meeting is starting.” I give Carter a heads-up.

“Okay.” Carter’s probing hand stills up Amara’s thigh. “We’ll wait for you back home, then.”

“No.” My plan is something I wouldn’t have considered a month ago. Then again, I would’ve never imagined I’d be fucking my stepson and his girlfriend, either. “While I’ll talk to these assholes, I want you to listen carefully. Everything I say is an order to you and Amara.” I lower my voice. “Tell her two staff members have an argument and I have to settle this.”

“Kinky, I like it.”

Even at this angle, I can see Carter as he shoves his fingers into Amara’s pussy. Hear her sweet whimper, watch her hands going to his biceps as he repeats what I just said, give or take.

Amara giggles as I remove one of the wireless headphones. A sound I’d rather hear over my meeting any day of the week.

And it’s not like I’m in pain over here. The whole forbidden aspect isn’t something I expected to like, but I do.

“Evening, Macy. Riggs,” I start my meeting while Carter slides his tongue along Amara’s jawline.

“Why’s your screen black?” Riggs demands of me.

With my cock throbbing in my palm, I lift my eyes to look at Riggs.

He doesn’t see me. Doesn’t need to. The moment my gaze locks on his, he flinches. Macy senses my glare on them just the same. She tugs on her long, red ponytail nervously. Her brown eyes dart anywhere except the camera.

My presence terrorizes them.

“I have a question for you, Riggs.” My tone is flat. Amara gasps when Carter bites her, forcing me to suppress a satisfied smirk. “Why don’t you keep your bullshit questions to yourself?”

Amara’s gasp turns into giggles and then into a scream the more Carter plays with her. When I bring the phone’s screen to my eyes, I see Carter’s teeth tugging on her lip ring, his cock grinding on her pussy. Not fucking her. Not yet.

“You’re right, Killian.” Riggs has the sense to correct himself. “Sorry, we’re a little on edge over here.”

“You think I don’t know that?” Each word comes out slow. As slow as I’m fucking my hand. My next words aren’t a threat. They’re meant for Carter, and consequently, Amara. “You two fucking around on the same territory.”

My obedient Carter growls, “I’m being ordered to fuck you,” just as he’s tearing Amara’s panties off, pulling them from under her ass.

The thin, lace fabric flails in the air, cascading down to the floor. Her hands clutch his shoulders, balancing herself when he pushes into her.

“When I remember we agreed you wouldn’t.” Tension builds in my groin. “You’re breaking your promise to me, and you know I don’t take disobedience lightly.”

“Fuck, she’s wet.” Carter takes directions, being obedient and fucking her harder. His hands are on her hips, keeping her in place while he drives into her. “So wet and tight, pet.”

“Baby,” Amara cries out amidst Carter’s throaty curses.

“Again,” Riggs starts, “I apologize, Killian.”

“Your apology means shit when you make a big fucking mess.”

“He wants a mess.” Carter tears down the other sleeve on Amara’s dress. Her tits bounce while he’s fucking her relentlessly. “Let’s get you messy, A.” He spits on her collarbone. “Rub it on your tits. Get my saliva all over you.”

Macy rambles on about how Riggs keeps fucking things up for her. Riggs cuts her by saying no New York corner will ever belong to people from

Florida who have no business being here.

They're fighting over pennies. It's an embarrassment.

Thankfully, I have Amara and Carter to make me forget about these idiots. She pulls her feet up the counter, and I can only imagine the view Carter gets. Her pink pussy. Her swollen lips. What his cock looks like dragging in and out of her.

"Shut up." I shift my gaze to the work call. "We settled this over Christmas—over *four* months ago. Macy's people will sell their drugs on that turf. Not you. Was I not clear?"

Carter's ragged groan has my focus snapping to my phone. One of his hands has Amara's hair rolled around it. He's tilting her hair back, and his lips part at her throat. Ready to bite.

"You were, but—"

It's almost as if Riggs is actively trying to help me boss Amara and Carter around. Maybe he's less useless than I thought.

"Riggs," I cut him off. "You go against me one more time, it's going to hurt. Really fucking hurt."

"Pain, pet. My favorite."

Amara screams again as Carter yanks on her hair harder. Pulling on her silky blond locks until her eyes look at the ceiling. I hear her when the pain turns into pleasure. When she moans *please*. I lick my lips, imagining the muscles on his ass tightening with every shove.

"Does that hurt, our beautiful slut?" Carter leans in, biting her for real this time.

"Yes," she shrieks.

"Tell Killian. Let him know how deep I'm shoved inside you."

"It hurts," Amara chokes out. "Killian, I'm so fucking full."

I squeeze the throbbing head of my cock. I'm neither gentle nor subtle with how hard I grip myself. The painful need to be in either Amara or Carter won't go away, and I can't stroke myself the way I'd like. I just clench and unclench my fingers, aching for this call to end.

"You won't have to, Killian," stupid Riggs mumbles. "I respect you. That's why I came to you. I'm sorry."

Riggs's shortcomings are nothing new, nor do they annoy me today. My eyes won't leave the phone. Won't look away from the two people fucking.

"Stop talking to me." My following instructions are meant for the people surrounded by flowers. "Talk to her. Tell her how sorry you are."

Carter’s thrusts slow. He’s still violent. Amara’s body jolts as he lowers his lips to lap his tongue on her nipple. He’s almost sweet. Her hands fly to his hair, her lips curving into a scowl.

“I’m…sorry?” Carter seems confused, an interesting twist and a big fucking turn on.

“I don’t want your fucking apologies,” both women say at once.

“I need you to fuck me,” Amara groans. “Please.”

Her desire overcomes her common sense. And it lands her another bite from Carter. A vicious one, judging by the satisfaction in her loud sigh.

“Leave my corner and stop messing with my people.” Macy slams the desk on her end, ruining the moaning and grunting I’m much more interested in hearing. “Your boss’s dad gave it to me before he died. It. Is. Mine.”

“That was before you moved to Florida, Macy,” Riggs grumbles.

Carter leaves Amara’s neck, pressing his forehead to hers. He grabs her hands, pins them to the counter behind her. Using her body as leverage to resume his fast, relentless pace.

“Oh my God, Carter, your piercing.” Amara pushes her tits up. “Right there, please, right there. I’m so close.”

I want her breasts in my mouth. I want my cock squeezed between them.

“I could’ve moved to Mars for all I care,” Macy continues. “That corner is mine.”

“In that case, why don’t you?” Riggs gets on my motherfucking nerves again.

Fucking toddlers.

“Touch your clit, A,” Carter demands. “Make yourself come. I’m not leaving until you come twice. Until your pussy milks me dry.”

Amara does as he says, slipping a hand from Carter’s grip and sliding it between them.

“Riggs,” I threaten, and he cringes.

Seconds later, Amara orgasms. Her cries and rippling body, while Carter rams into her, become the only reason I exist.

Stroking myself faster and making myself come is out of the question. The wrong people will hear my hand on my dick, my unrestrainable groans.

“Killian, I need guarantees.” Macy—who was scared of me less than ten minutes ago—speaks louder. “He needs to back off. Period.”

No one talks back to me unless it’s Amara or Carter. My nerves are already shot to hell and my cock begs for release. I’m on edge, and these two assholes refuse to let me end this call.

“Macy, you’re out of fucking line.”

My reprimand is louder than I would’ve liked, because Amara hears it. I know, because she takes it as an instruction, slapping Carter.

She fucking slapped him.

More precum leaks on my fingers, and I move my hand from root to tip. Slow. Painfully slow.

Carter curls his fingers around her throat. He ruts into her like he’s trying to reach her esophagus with his dick.

“Dirty slut.” He’s in her face, licking her cheek. “I’m going to have to discipline you now. Have been waiting for this opportunity, pet.”

His hand closes in tighter, seeing how hard she’s fighting to breathe. Being around them for two weeks, I know he’s not cutting off her air entirely. He isn’t punishing her, either.

He’s pushing her into another orgasm. A more intense one seeing how her body quivers.

“Sorry, Killian.” Macy doesn’t go for lame excuses like Riggs had.

“Riggs, you back off her corner.” Carter pulls out of Amara. My balls tighten with the desire to touch his cock, taste her arousal on him. “I hear even one of your men drive by, and they won’t be breathing for long. Macy and a few other of your enemies will have my permission to have at you. That’s final. Do we have an understanding?”

“What do I tell the boss?” he asks, thinking I’m afraid of them.

What a joke. They don’t scare me. I own the most powerful men and women in the city. In many ways, Carter and I are the motherfucking puppet masters.

“Repeat what I said. Word for word. End of story.”

Amara’s moans pound in my ears. My hand picks up the pace on my dick as I imagine I’m the one stretching her tight little cunt.

“Thank—”

I end the call before Macy finishes. I don’t need *her* to finish.

I need to finish.

Right. Now.

“She’s moaning,” I bark at Carter. “It means she’s having too much fun. Do I have to come down there and make her scream?”

“No.” Carter thrusts into Amara, hard enough that her body jolts.

“I’ll come by the time you do, Kill,” he grits out, breaths labored.

I spit on my hand, resuming fucking my hand. The relief overwhelms me. It rushes through me, the fire searing. Agonizing. I let out a feral sound out of my chest, one that’s been lodged in there for the entire video conference.

His mouth opens to say something while Amara smirks.

“You like fucking her?”

“Fuck, yeah.”

“Describe it to me.” My insides wound up tight. My lips sink painfully into my bottom lip. “How does it feel, having your thick, pulsing cock in her cunt, Carter?”

“She’s so wet. So tight. I want to tear her apart.”

Carter reaches behind Amara, swiping the flower pot she had there to the floor. It crashes to the floor, breaking into pieces.

“What did you do that for?” Amara pushes her face into Carter’s.

“Doubt me again, Amara.” Carter manhandles her, flattening her back to the counter.

Without a word, he fishes out his other bud, adjusting it in Amara’s ear. Then his hand curls around her throat possessively as he continues to bury himself inside her.

“Beautiful girl, open your mouth,” I say, my voice gruff. Her immediate obedience softens my heart and turns me into a ravenous beast all at once. “Pretend your dirty little mouth takes me in. My cock fucks your throat while Carter is balls deep inside your cunt. Do you feel it? Do you feel how you gag on me?”

Her nails scrape the counter. Her head thrashes back, the moans of her orgasm filling my ears. While she keeps her lips parted for me. So I’d see what she’d look like sucking me off like we had the other day.

“I’m going to come,” I grit out.

“Thank fuck, I’m right there with you.” His hair falls on his forehead.

I explode on my hand, shooting hot cum on my hand and my shirt. I’m not jealous when Carter orgasms inside Amara. I’m there. Fucking there.

“You owe me for that pot, Carter.” Amara’s the first to break our silence, grinning from ear to ear.

If only she knew that he’d paid her back, and then some. How we’ll always get her everything and anything she might want and need.

She will. Soon.

“Pet.” Carter helps her up, his hand remaining around her neck. “I’ll give you the world. All you have to do is ask.”

“We will,” I agree and mean it. She turns her head to the camera and hence to me. Her smile shines so bright that my cold heart doesn’t just thaw. It melts into a puddle. “We’ll give you the whole damn universe.”

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CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

Carter

I've never been big on micromanaging. Luna and our staff do a great job. Neither Kill nor I are needed to oversee every single detail. Which is why he's the one at our attorney's office, crossing the t's and dotting the i's before Amara's shop becomes hers and hers alone.

And I'm here. I'm watching. You bet your ass I am.

Watching her.

Getting hard from the cute, graceful way she arranges the flowers for Luna's wedding. We're in conference room number two, the one we converted into a venue for a day.

I lean against one of the walls close to Amara, pretending to look over the room. I fucking don't.

Every ounce of my focus belongs to her. Our unhinged woman in a khaki jumpsuit that hugs her breasts and round ass. With her wild blond hair tamed into two space buns on her head, she's cute as fuck.

Fucking edible.

"Look at you, so, so pretty for Luna's big day," our woman hums to the arrangement as she sets it down. "Even in the dim light, you're shiny. Making Momma proud."

My cock jerks at the attention she gives them. I cross one ankle over the other as if that'd hide the massive hard-on I'm sporting.

Nothing can hide my need for her. It takes over everything. It's everywhere. Because she's beautiful. Because her body bends to our will

however we fucking want her. Because she’s so pretty when she’s wet, dripping, begging. Because her crazy matches mine.

Because she’s the needle and the thread sewing the three of us together.

I’m obsessed. With her. With both of them.

A fatal illness, one I’ll take with me to my grave.

“Hey, flower girl,” I call when my already thin patience runs out.

Amara turns to fully face me. Hesitant, until I give in and wink at her. A quick one only Amara could catch. Her concentrated pout turns into a smile. Her scrunched brows shoot up.

“Everything okay?”

Better than okay. Better now that her smile shines brilliantly at me.

“These look good.” I cross my arms over my chest, tilting my head. “Nice work over there.”

“I’ll let Opal know you like it.”

I almost groan in frustration. Amara says Opal is the creative one of the two. That’s bullshit. She knows her flowers. She knows exactly what to do to make them stand out.

Opal is fine. Amara is…

Everything.

“I’m telling you, flower girl,” I whisper. “It’s you. Just you.”

She blushes, spinning on her heel to grab another arrangement and fusses around it.

Most days, the woman is feral. But I do get her flustered sometimes. I fucking love it.

My freaking heart warms at that. My fingers itch to touch her.

No.

We’ll be home in a few hours. Then…

Patience isn’t my strong suit, but I’m trying. For her. Case in point, I’ve been keeping my mouth shut about her surprise.

It’s been a challenge. Amara’s been mentioning the shop every single day now. Asked us why we think her parents took down the shop’s listing. If she can move her flowers and plants to our penthouse.

And I. Keep. My. Mouth. Shut.

Well, not really. I open it to suck on her clit until she forgets her questions.

Semantics.

Doesn’t matter. I do what’s needed of me. Waiting for the special night we have planned for her for the big reveal. The night we present her with the deed of ownership with her name stamped on it.

Once this wedding is behind us.

Jesus, she’s adorable, kissing the flowers she placed near the altar.

“Remind me again why I wasn’t allowed to invite her?” Luna materializes next to me.

The further away she is from this place, the safer she’ll be.

I can’t tell Luna that, no matter how much I trust her. Same reason I need the goddamn stars in my eyes gone.

And my erection. That’s a tell if I ever saw one.

Dead people. Vomit. Torn limbs.

Shit. Now, I’m leaking precum.

Butterflies. Heart-shaped balloons. Stuffed animals.

Flaccid as fuck. Good dick.

“Flower girl is nice.” I twist to Luna, smoothing the sleeves of my jacket. “Too nice for this place.”

“Which makes me?” She crosses her arms over her chest.

Best defense is offense.

And Luna in jeans and a gray T-shirt without a drop of makeup on her face are my ammo.

“Late.”

“For?”

I level her with a *Seriously?* look. “I don’t know much about weddings, but this isn’t very bridal.”

“Right after I do this last once-over. I have to make sure everything’s in place.”

“*I’m* here for that,” I retort. “Since your stubborn ass refused to hire a wedding planner, I’m it. Go up to your suite.”

Stop asking about Amara while you’re at it.

“I’m stubborn because I want to oversee my wedding. So here I am, overseeing it.” Other brides—the ones I’ve seen in the movies—are all smiles. Luna doesn’t let up on her frown. “Also, now I’m sure you’re hiding something. Answer my question, Carter. Chop, chop.”

“You’re nice, Luna. You are. Flower girl, she’s…” I let my gaze trail to Amara. “Pure. You can tell from just looking at her that she’s too good for this place. No offense.”

“None taken.”

Amara senses me watching her from across the room. She has her profile to me when her lips twitch in what resembles a smile. Other than that, she doesn’t acknowledge me. It breaks my heart. Shreds the miserable organ right down the middle.

Killian is right. I have to tell her. Once I do, the three of us will start coming out with our polyamorous relationship. Hand holding here. A whisper there. Making sure everyone sees Killian and I haven’t been fucking since I was underage or anything. Without anyone undermining us, we can keep Amara safe.

That is if she still wants us after she learns who we really are.

“Anyway.” I return to Luna who’s squinting her eyes. She hates secrets. Welcome to the fucking club. “None of our suppliers need to know what we’re doing here.”

Technically not a lie. Our staff’s being made aware of it for their own safety. They have to. They roam the halls, clean the rooms, and handle these people on a daily basis.

Our suppliers, on the other hand, pop in and out of the hotel. They shouldn’t run into trouble with our members.

Shouldn’t being the operative word.

“One of them might say the wrong thing, and I’d have to kill them.” My psycho smile pops out for a visit. “I’m always down for that. Killian…a little less.”

“Carter, it’s a wedding.” A man I don’t recognize calls to Luna. She turns to a guy who must be the hairdresser the way he’s wielding an iron curler like a weapon. “Amara is fun. She’s worked hard on the flowers. Don’t be a jerk, tell her I want her as my guest.”

“Yes. It’s a wedding. Weddings mean drunk people.” I wipe the smile off my face. She has to realize how serious I am. “You invited some members. Had your family and friends sign NDAs. That’s your business. Our suppliers are mine.”

“Luna, your bridesmaids are ready and you’re still here,” the man calls to her. “In what world does that make sense?”

“In mine.” She grins at him. The psycho grin she’s learned from watching me. The guy flinches. Then she turns to me and says, “I’ll be expecting to see her there. Today is my day, and for once, you will be the one to do as I say.”

“Fine, fine.” I wave her away like the annoying little sister she’s becoming. “I’ll talk to the flower girl.”

“Maybe you’ll even grow a pair and ask her out.” Luna whirls around and saunters over to her scared-looking hairdresser.

Thank fuck for that comment. If Luna hasn’t noticed something’s up between us, no one has. Relieved, my eyes wander back to Amara. She dotes over the flowers and talks to them. Hasn’t stopped since she got here.

Sweet. Cheerful. Totally unsuspecting.

All it’d take was just one person to slip up to take it away from her. Her trust in us would be forever severed and it’d be *my* fault.

Still…

No one will mess with Amara if I hover around her. Be her bodyguard.

Amara will have a fun night out. With us sort of, and with the rest of the people here too. She’s cute and bubbly. Anyone would be insane not to want to be her friend.

Insane, or dead by my hands.

Amara gives her flowers one last kiss before straightening. Adjusts the collar of her jumpsuit. Smooths the fabric around her hips.

My gaze rakes the venue, looking for threats. Anyone who looks at her a second too long will end up in pieces.

Focus.

A night out. Fun times for Amara. That’s what matters. We’ll watch her from afar, and it’ll be our twisted little idea of a date. Just until we’re able to offer her something better.

Why the fuck not?

“Flower girl,” I yell.

Her grin is goofy and sweet. “I’m Amara.”

“Whatever.”

My attitude has her biting her lip to suppress a laugh. She can’t stop her shoulders from shaking, though.

I fight my own smile. “You almost done? I need a word.”

“One sec, Mr. Steele.” She turns her back to me, playing with a flower.

She’s not actually arranging it. She’s being a brat. Slapping me yesterday and the punishment she got turned her on.

“In my office,” I bark and head out before I bend her over and spank her raw. “Now.”

Her heels clink in the hallway right behind me. She wants my attention. I want hers just the same. I'm whipped as fuck.

We stop before the closed door to the office. "Amara."

My serious expression doesn't bother her. She grins, hopping in place. "Carter."

The scent of her arousal is everywhere. Clouding over her jasmine scent. Driving me crazy.

Opening the door for her, I step aside. "Right this way."

"Am I in trouble?"

From the corner of my eye, I see Killian slamming his laptop closed. Guess he's back early. "In trouble for what?"

"No one's in trouble." I close the door behind me, lean against the wall and cross my ankles.

"So?" Amara steps toward me, her hands lifting to my neck. "Boss?"

"Scratch that." I curl my fingers around her wrists. "No one *was* in trouble."

Killian gets up, his dark eyes watching us curiously.

Amara senses his presence the same as she does me. She glimpses back, licking her plump lips. "And now?"

"You were being a brat back there." I yank her toward me, and she whimpers. "Not so brave now, are you, pet?"

Yeah, she's brave. She's also turned on by the promise of pain.

Killian rounds the desk. He walks toward us, grabbing one of her space buns and tugging. "You've been bad, beautiful girl?"

With her head to him, she rolls her eyes playfully. "Hmm. Maybe. Yes."

He bends to press a kiss to her lips. I see him baring his teeth, turning the soft kiss into a painful bite. She groans with pleasure and puts up a fight at the same time.

"Cute little prey." I marvel at the tears forming at the corners of her eyes. Killian knows how to pull her hair. "You'll get spanked for it, tonight. When we get back from the wedding."

Those are my last words before Killian releases Amara. He has his hand around the side of my neck, dragging my lips to his. Kissing me with the taste of Amara's blood on his tongue.

He'd never been overly lovey-dovey as my stepfather. He'd been a good one, no doubt about that. Had done everything right. But we never hugged. No forehead kisses. Neither of us had been into that.

At most, he ruffled my hair when I punched a kid who bullied me. And that didn't happen often. Most kids hadn't fucked with me.

This warm possessiveness, I've only ever received it from Amara.

Having Killian's tongue part my lips, slipping between them and rubbing against mine without thinking about sex, feels nice. Real fucking nice.

Jesus, these people are turning me into a softie.

One of my hands slides from Amara's body. My fingers make a fist around Killian's tie, gripping him just as possessively as I yank him to me. Amara wiggles between us, moaning so pretty from watching us.

Fast—way too fast—he pulls away. His breaths are ragged, lips swollen. My cock strains against my pants when Amara reaches up to swipe my saliva from his bottom lip.

"Aww, you two are so cute."

Amara's cooing sobers me the fuck up. First, I'm pussy-whipped by her and now…what? I'm dick-whipped?

And who'll stick a knife into asshole members and people trying to attack her?

Yeah, no. I'm not fucking dick-whipped. Or pussy-whipped for that matter.

"You're bad." I tug on her free bun, knowing she'll gasp. She does, and I spit between her beautiful, crimson lips. "So fucking bad."

"Carter." Killian clears his throat. "You didn't call Amara here to fuck her. Right?"

"That's right."

"What's going on, then?"

"You, flower girl, were invited to the wedding. By Luna." I grab her by the neck, loving the feel of her throat bobbing when she swallows my spit. "You're coming."

Her eyes brighten. I cast my gaze up to find Killian's pitch-black ones.

"We discussed this." He pins me with a glare. One that says, *You know damn well why she shouldn't be there*.

"Luna asked and I made an executive decision."

My blatant disregard earns me his scowl and Amara's excited yelp.

"Thank you, muffin," she screeches in my ear.

As soon as Killian's grip on her hair loosens, Amara throws herself at me and Killian. She kisses me first, hot and urgent and everywhere.

This warmth in my chest again. I'm fucking melting over here.

The tiniest smile flashes across Killian's lips. Just as whipped as I am.

When she turns to him, his smile disappears. He's worried.

Join the club. "We'll be there, Kill."

My reassurance doesn't satisfy Amara. "Please say yes," she pleads.

"Of course. Just remember—"

"You two are my bosses." Amara mirrors Killian's serious face, and it's fucking hard to keep from cracking up. "Mr. Murdock. Mr. Steele."

"Good girl," I praise, tightening my grip around her middle and glancing at Killian. "Babysit the venue for an hour? I'll drop A at home so she can change. That is, if you want to."

"Of course," Killian answers.

I don't think he even notices his hand at the back of my neck, caressing me absentmindedly. But I do. Amara does too, grinning at me and purring because he's doing the same to her.

What a dysfunctional Brady Bunch we make.

Refusing to ruin the moment, I don't utter a word.

Until Amara's face drops out of nowhere.

"What is it, pet?"

Amara's perfect white teeth scrape along her plump bottom lip. "I don't have anything to wear."

"We'll have a gown sent to you," Killian and I say together.

"No." Amara's mouth gapes in horror. "Those are expensive."

"Doesn't matter." Together. Again.

"I can't say no, can I?"

"No."

"Then get me something with a flower pattern or flowers on it, Killian. Please." She spins toward him, pressing her hands together. "If we get to go to a formal event *sort of* with my two kings, I want to look like the princess I'll feel on the inside."

Soon, baby. You'll have everything, soon.

"Matching flower heels too. I'm size—"

I grab her by the throat. "You're not a princess. You're a queen."

"Don't worry about anything." Killian lets go of me. His two hands cover hers, and he kisses each one. "You don't have to beg, either, beautiful girl. I'm happy to spoil you."

"And while we're on the subject of money." I hook an arm around her middle, hauling her to me. I'm a greedy bastard, so fucking what. "Stop

opening our mail. You're not paying our bills."

"You knew?" Her gasp has me wanting to put more of my saliva in there. Fill up her every hole.

"Yes. I've had them forwarded to my email since."

"Hmph."

More of Killian's rare laugh follows us to the private elevator.

Fuck. There's no escape from this. From telling her I love her, and soon. I'll have to figure out how. Bottling this shit for much longer will give me an ulcer. Or worse.

Make me soft with all the emotions inside me.

I am not soft.

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CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX

Amara

He listened. Killian really listened.

Lingering outside Luna's wedding venue, I pat down the chiffon ankle-length he'd had sent to me earlier this afternoon. Black, of course. Almost not wedding appropriate, if not for the small crystal roses scattered all over the skirt of the dress. It matches the sandals he'd chosen for me.

I lift my right foot, admiring the gorgeous black sandal and the crystal rose on the strap.

With my hair pulled up into a high ponytail, I feel like a princess.

You're a queen, Carter's words echo in my head. Their queen.

"Don't you look beautiful tonight, flower girl?" Carter's hoarse voice booms from my left.

"Thank you, Mr. Steele." Ever so slowly, I hide my grin as I twist to him.

Scruff trimmed, hair styled to the side, and his gray eyes gleaming. My handsome Carter in a tailormade black tux takes my breath away. Fucking steals it.

I hadn't seen him when he left the penthouse early. It was the only time since I moved in that he and Killian let anyone else drive me here.

A limo, but still.

He's stunning.

If I had any panties on, they'd be ruined by now.

His eyes roam across my smokey eyes, my smooth ponytail. He devours the sweetheart neckline of my dress shamelessly, eating up my cleavage.

Taking advantage that no one's around, he rubs his jaw, grinding his teeth. Admiring me. Holding back from eating me up.

"Nice heels you paired with the dress." Carter smirks as his attention returns to my face.

"You'll love what I have underneath even better." My whisper is swallowed by the slow metal and rock songs filtering from inside the venue.

He hears me, though.

"Such a dirty girl." Carter checks out our surroundings. I see his hand twitching at his side. "Tell me what you've got under there."

My smile is wide and innocent. Deceiving. "Nothing."

"Fuck, Amara, I know I asked, but you can't say these things." I'm delighted at how hard Carter works to control himself.

"You made it." Killian's comes up to us from inside the venue. "Beautiful gown, Amara."

The older man is the definition of mouthwatering. He's wearing an identical tux to Carter's, but his dirty blond hair is brushed back. He hasn't shaved and his scruff is dark.

His gaze is a million shades darker, though.

My eyes must widen comically as I ogle him because he shakes his head, stifling his satisfied smirk.

You're a hot motherfucker, I try to channel my thoughts over to him, same as he and Carter do. *You'll be hotter when I peel the tux off you later.*

Not if I peel yours off first, I think his smoldering eyes tell me.

When I slide my gaze to Carter, his gray eyes don't talk. They're thunderous. Predatorial as they peruse Killian and me.

The sound of people chattering from the hallway reminds me we're not alone. I scoot to the side to let them through. Carter surprises me by pressing his hand to the small of my back and directing me into the venue.

"I thought we weren't supposed to do this," I grit out behind clenched teeth so as to not be overheard.

"We're not doing anything." He nods at a random older couple as we enter the venue. "Just escorting flower girl here. Being a decent host."

Killian walks behind us at a safe distance. I twist my head over my shoulder because I'm greedy like that. Behind two blonds I recognize as a part of the staff, I find his intense attention on us.

I'll bury myself so deep into you tonight, your pills will be useless.

Obviously, he doesn't say that out loud. He channels it to me.

I’m sure he does. And I giggle in return.

The two nice ladies furl their brows in confusion.

“Hey.” My wave is way too enthusiastic. Both Carter and Killian snort. Handsome assholes. “Perfect day to have a wedding, isn’t it?”

“Uh, I guess,” the younger one, Kim, I recall now, answers. “We’re having it inside, so it doesn’t really matter?”

Their stares lower to where Carter touches me.

I improvise, grabbing their attention. “I mean, it’s bad luck to get married when it snows.”

Total bullshit. I have no idea what I’m yapping about. All I know is they’re looking away from Carter’s hand on my back.

“My goodness, thanks for telling me. I’ll have to mention it to my granddaughter.” Natalie, the other one, scours through her purse. “She’s getting married next year, and they’re aiming for a winter wedding.”

Hook, line, and motherfucking sinker.

“Better get on it, then.” I stick to the white lie.

Carter’s whisper of, “Bad girl,” has my heart beating wildly.

Then I catch a glimpse of something rare and beautiful. Killian’s smiling. It’s blinding, like watching a lunar eclipse. Dark and wonderful.

Another second of that, and I’ll dissolve into nothing.

I spin to Carter, my other handsome, amused partner. “About your earlier comment, Mr. Steele.”

His gray eyes glint in a challenge as we pass through the doors.

“You’re anything but decent.” My words aren’t an insult. They’re meant to be a compliment. Still, I add in case he misunderstood me, “It’s one of the things I like the most about you.”

“Beautiful, bad girl,” Carter says, taking a step to the right.

The lack of his heat on my back is painful. But I understand. More people appear in front of us. Some I recognize, some I don’t. Doesn’t matter. We have company. Lots.

“Amara, the flowers turned out lovely.” Killian flanks me from my other side. His stern tone comforts me.

His lips are pressed tight, his eyes apologetic. Then he’s looking down at my cleavage, and they heat up. I bet he’s seeing his cock there. Pounding into me. Coming on my throat.

“Mr. Murdock.” My wide smile somehow complements his ever-serious scowl. “My pleasure. Opal did most of the work, I just spread them around

here.”

“That again?” Carter teases me, his voice low. “Maybe we should’ve invited Opal instead.”

“No.” My nostrils flare.

“Maybe next time.”

His playfulness sparks a fire inside me. I want to tear his tux off, climb him, and bite every single inch of his body.

Later.

The black seats on either side of the aisles begin filling up. The lights begin to dim. The ceremony will start any moment now.

Carter’s gaze dares me to be naughty.

Straightening my spine, I turn as if I’m about to leave to take a seat with the rest of the guests.

Right before I disappear into the crowd, I whisper to Carter, “You invite Opal instead of me, and I’m hiding your lube.”

I stride off, not sparing him a glance. I don’t get to watch the effect it had on him.

Don’t need it. I have Killian’s surprised cough to tell me I nailed it.

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CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN

Amara

Never, in a million years, would I have believed I'd cry at a wedding. Luna and Julien have officially broken me.

From the song choice for her walk down the aisle—an acoustic version of Foo Fighters' "Generator"—to the vows they exchanged and how she ended hers by saying, "I'd chop your balls off if you ever cheat on me."

My God.

The perfect wedding does exist.

Carter occupied the seat to my left while the couple talked about their forever and ever. For the first time ever, I saw him shooting a deeply apologetic glance my way. To his left, Killian did the same. His lips mouthed two words, "I'm sorry."

They had nothing to be sorry for. I didn't want to get hitched. My tears weren't shed over this thing we have between us. Over the secrets we keep.

We'd get married, eventually. I hoped. It's just this bridal talk that'd fucked with my head. Had me daydreaming of shit I'd never cared for.

My fiancé this. *My future wife* that. It was so sweet.

I want that for myself.

No, I don't. I remind myself as I fix my gaze on the bride and groom. It's my hormones talking.

This has nothing to do with Carter and Killian. They haven't told me they loved me yet.

"I now pronounce you husband and wife," the wedding officiant announces, mentally slapping me out of my head. "You may kiss the bride."

At last. Another second of this emotional onslaught and my tears would've ruined my dress. And I love this piece Killian got me.

Then again, the horrified looks they'd give me if I cried so much that I managed to destroy the fabric… Maybe that isn't the worst idea. I'd laugh and forget about the stupid dreams I've never wanted to begin with.

I stand up, smiling at Kim and Natalie who sat to my right. It takes everything in me to ignore Killian and Carter whose eyes I feel scorching my skin.

These men will end up giving me a whiplash. They've been clear about the importance of appearance. How we need to pace ourselves, pretend we're in the flirting stage. Once we're sure this relationship is forever.

Yet here they are, sending me cryptic messages. Boring holes into my profile.

"I'm going to get myself a drink," I tell the two women. "Can I get you something from the bar?"

My new friends return my smile. Their kindness warms me to my core. Friendship is such a foreign concept to me. Usually, when I tell people I talk to my flowers, their faces twist and they walk in the other direction.

These sweet blonds haven't.

It's settled, then. I'm keeping them.

Maybe next time I'm delivering flowers here—that is, if I still have my shop—I'll hang out a little. I'm sure Opal won't mind. I'll even tell her to hang the closed sign. For another thirty minutes or so.

"No, thank you, Amara." Natalie brushes back a loose strand of her hair. "We're going to congratulate Luna, then we're headed home. We have the morning shift tomorrow."

"I guess I'll see you around?" My voice is strained. Doubt twists my belly. Are my new friends blowing me off?

I don't even feel the men's attention on me anymore. That's how nervous I am.

"Damn right, you will." Kim squeezes my hand and joy resurfaces in my chest. "We're here a lot. Better yet, let's exchange numbers. We'll have a girls' night when the stars align and both of us have a morning off."

My grin tears at my face. Literally. Smiling hurts, but it's a good kind of pain.

Not as good as Killian biting my clit while Carter's pounding into my ass. Close, though. Real fucking close.

“I’d love that.” I pull my phone from the hidden pocket in my dress.

Instead of putting in their last names, I type in new besties one and two. I show it to them, and they laugh. A friendly laugh. Since they’re leaving, we say our goodbyes and I head to the bar.

Carter and Killian aren’t staring at me anymore. They’re talking to Luna and Julien next to the altar. Now that they’re looking away, I miss their heated gazes.

Now who’s giving whom whiplash?

Bar. Gotta go to the bar.

On my way over, I notice many people I’ve seen over the past six months. Most are the staff of the hotel. Others are members I bumped into. The rest I assume are the happy couple’s family and friends.

The group of men at the corner of the venue, though, doesn’t fit into either category. They have a dark, unpleasant aura surrounding them.

I still wonder who these people are when it’s my turn to order my drink.

“What can I get you, Amara?” Jamey, the bartender, asks. Totally professional. He doesn’t flirt like he had with the woman who was before me.

Maybe he doesn’t like me like that.

And maybe Carter’s and Killian’s proverbial pee in a circle around me scares the living fuck out of him. After what they did to Christopher, it wouldn’t surprise me.

I’m theirs. Jamey and everyone senses it. They’re aware that messing with me would suck big time.

Is it sick that I get excited over it?

“Amara?”

“One Shirley Temple, please.” My mouth waters for something sweet. Something that won’t get me drunk.

Loose lips sink ships and all that. So no to alcohol for me. I like my ship where it is.

“Coming right up.” Jamey turns to start mixing my drink.

“Nice of you to work on Luna’s wedding day.” I lean on the bar, sneaking glances at the group of suspicious men.

“Not to brag, but I’m the best bartender in the whole Tri-state area.” He smiles over his shoulder. “And Luna deserves the best.”

“She does,” I say absentmindedly.

“There you go.” Jamey hands over the red-orange drink.

“Thanks.”

Sipping on the pink straw, I continue studying the room and the strangers from my place at the bar. Guests—Carter and Killian included—watch Luna and Julien’s first dance on the improvised dancefloor. The couple is adorable, swaying in a slow dance to Megadeth’s “Paranoid.”

Everyone’s captivated by them.

Everyone but the men in the corner. I have to know who these people are.

“Hey, Jamey.” I lean closer, and he mirrors my gesture while keeping a respectful distance. “The men over there. They look familiar, don’t they?”

His green eyes widen almost imperceptivity. I catch it nonetheless.

“They’re members.” Refusing to give me another clue, he grabs a glass from the bar and starts wiping it.

Curious. Very curious.

“Hmm, makes sense.”

“I wouldn’t go staring at our members, Amara,” Jamey says without averting his attention from the glass.

I’m on a reckless streak, because I return to staring at the men. I’m sure that if I look long enough, I’ll figure out who they are.

I’m positive I’ve seen them before.

Maybe—Oh, shit.

Oh, shit.

The tallest one in the black suit stares back at me. I still don’t recognize him, but I’m scared. His dark gaze has my heart plummeting to the floor. He resumes talking to the other creeps. I don’t breathe any easier because of that.

Putting my drink on the bar, I turn to Jamey. “Why not stare at them, exactly?”

“Hmm.” The line has cleared up, so he continues to focus on the glass he’s cleaning. Wipes, wipes, and wipes.

A weird feeling as though someone’s watching me takes over. I don’t dare check who’s eyeing me. I might be reckless and curious, but I’m no fool.

“Are they celebrities?” I whisper to Jamey, baiting him for more information.

Crickets.

Why won’t Jamey answer me?

Fuck, now I’m even more curious.

“Just tell me if I’m hot or cold?”

“Miss Carmichael.” A voice behind me thunders over the electric guitar in the background.

A voice I’d recognize anywhere.

My heart thrums in my chest as I spin around. I perch my elbows on the bar, thrusting my breasts forward, pretending not to be bothered. Both Killian and Carter’s eyes slide lower for a brief second.

“Hot or cold, what?” Carter’s tone is tinged with anger, despite his wide smile.

The one he aims at Jamey behind the bar.

“Nothing, really.” Apparently, that was all it took for the bartender to find his voice. “I was being polite, I swear.”

“He’s right.” Images of Jamey bleeding don’t particularly appeal to me. He did nothing wrong. “It’s me. I was being nosy.”

On the other hand, my men’s violence is such a turn-on. I’ll have to get a reaction out of them by myself without risking Jamey’s forehead.

Sluuuurp. I drain the rest of my Shirley Temple obnoxiously.

Their eyes slam on me. I continue sucking on the straw.

Killian’s nostrils flare. His eyes are blazing.

“Nosy about what, Jamey?” Carter doesn’t let up, stepping closer to me.

Poor Jamey. I have to save him.

“About them.” I cock my head to the side. “Were they on *Law & Order* or something?”

“Miss Carmichael,” Killian hisses. “You seem to be asking a lot of questions tonight.”

“No, no, please.” Jamey jumps to my rescue. “Don’t be mad at her.”

“She’s not in trouble,” Killian calms Jamey.

Carter chimes in, “It’s just that we value our members’ privacy.”

It’s on the tip of my tongue to tell the good-intentioned man that I want Killian and Carter mad. Means they’ll spank my pussy later. *Hmm.*

Jamey mumbles, “Of course,” behind me.

My brain tunes out their conversation. Out of nowhere, I finally realize where I’ve seen these men. They were on TV.

On a show not too different from *Law & Order* in its essence.

The news.

And they sure weren’t the presenters.

“Holy shit,” I mumble. The realization hits so hard that I stumble and almost fall down.

Killian reacts in a flash. He slips his strong, hot arm between me and the bar. His hand presses possessively to my back. I feel his bicep flexing as he holds me in place.

His dark brown eyes narrow, assessing me. “You okay?”

“I…” Rather than being scared or upset, I’m excited. I’ve never been around criminals.

“What did you put in her drink?” Carter slams his hands on the bar beside me.

Though I can’t see him as I stare directly at Killian, I assume Carter is baring his teeth. About to climb over and rip out Jamey’s throat. My sexy beast.

“Nothing.” Jamey’s voice trembles. “I swear on my mother’s life. Nothing.”

“I’m okay.” My need to save Jamey’s throat wins over my oh-my-God moment. I put the empty glass on the bar, then grip Carter’s forearm. “I’m fine, except…”

“Let’s get her out of here,” Carter urges us. He’s one badass hotel owner. In another life, he would’ve made an amazing bodyguard.

“Miss Carmichael is overworked,” Killian talks over me, making excuses to Jamey. “We’ll escort her to where she can get some fresh air.”

Jamey stands there, speechless. I hope he hasn’t peed himself.

“If something happens to her, so help me, Jamey.” When I turn to Carter, I see him gripping Jamey’s collar with one hand, pressing his knife to his trembling throat. “I’m coming back for you. Trust me that your job won’t be the only thing you lose.”

“I’m fine,” I insist.

“Let’s go, Carter.” Killian starts walking us toward the exit.

Carter catches up to us, matching Killian’s long gait. We don’t talk on our way to the elevators. I don’t mind. What I do mind is the heavy, relentless feeling that we’re being watched.

Since Carter and Killian flank me from both sides, it’s not them. I twist my head back. The questionable members are deep in conversation with each other. No one’s paying attention to us.

Who’s watching us, then?

“You’ve been bad again, beautiful girl.” Killian mashes the elevator button and we wait for it to arrive. “Very bad.”

Uh-oh.

Any thoughts of stalkers fly right out of my brain. My depraved desires take over everything.

Punishments. Sexy, painful punishments. Please let it be hand necklaces. I love those.

“I have,” I breathe.

Carter moves closer to me. Threatening me without a single word or a touch.

Ping.

The elevator doors slide open.

Carter steps in first, punching the button that’ll take us to the parking garage. He doesn’t bother covering his erection. There’s no hiding it even if he tried, despite the impressive size of his hands. His cock is bigger.

Goosebumps prickle across my skin and my thighs clench as Killian ushers me inside. I steal a glance at Killian’s pants to my other side. He’s hard too.

I’m sandwiched between my two hungry men. Who are hot. For me. For each other.

The doors close and we begin our descent.

A million sexy scenarios run through my head. Pesky questions follow.

“They’re mafia, right?” I blurt out. “Mar… Mor… Something like that?”

“Amara.” Carter squeezes my hand tighter. There’s not a hint of reprimand in his voice. Just my name.

“Carter?”

Both Carter and Killian glare down at me. Their hands clutch mine.

Strange. The security people can see us.

“The cameras in the elevators stopped working?” I ask.

“We made them stop working, pet.” Carter massages my inner wrist, his grin wicked. “We turned them off.”

“And to your question.” Killian gestures for me to step into the parking garage once the elevator doors open. “Yes. They were mafia. Julien’s friends. And our members. We have all sorts of people here.”

He doesn’t offer another explanation, nor do I ask for one. At the moment. I’m high on the feeling of having my fingers enlaced with theirs out in the—sort of—open.

I can’t wait for us to get home.

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CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT

Carter

The moment the door to the penthouse closes, I'm on Amara. My chest is pressed to her back, my teeth run along the curve of her neck. My fingers push the zipper of her offensive dress down.

"Are they afraid of you? These Marino men? They have to be, right? Should I?" she asks now of all times.

After being quiet for the entire ride home. Her words are as chopped as her breathing, yet she still asks.

Sweet Amara. Curious Amara.

I wouldn't change a single thing about her. Even her weird-as-fuck timing. Satan knows my own tact is virtually nonexistent.

Then again, maybe the reason she hasn't said a word is our fault. Might have something to do with me fingering her to an orgasm in the back seat. While Killian instructed me how to touch her.

Oh, well. What matters is we're here. That she's asking about the Marino family with curiosity rather than disgust. She doesn't push me off her or spit in Killian's face as he nears her front.

We told her they're members of the hotel. One of the meanest mafia families in New York. And she stays. Now, I'm more optimistic about her reaction once she knows everything. I'm gaining confidence one step at a time.

When I confess to her that Killian and I end people's lives—out of necessity which I enjoy very much—she might stay.

I hope she does.

“Yes,” I hum in her ear. “You should be afraid.”

“Very afraid.” Killian stands in front of her. He’s brutal as he shoves the sleeves of the dress off her shoulders. “I thought you knew that.”

He pinches her pierced nipple, brushing his finger over the other. Harsh and soft. Playing with her head.

Turning her on.

Turning *me* on. Watching him touch her and listening to her moans turned screams has my cock so hard. I’m in agony.

I’m also an impatient fuck. I slip a hand to her bare ass, teasing her pucker. She clenches, screaming from the pain both Killian and I inflict. I lean forward, sucking and marking her shoulder as I look at Killian’s pants. He’s hard, making my dick jerk in response.

“W-what are you going to do to me?” she mumbles between eager, mindless moans.

“Oh, pet.” In one swift movement, I push three fingers into her soaking cunt. “So many things. So. Many.”

She’ll freak out once she hears what we have planned for tonight. Killian and I settled it while Amara tried to milk Jamey for information.

She has no idea what’s coming for her.

Amara keeps grinding on my hand. Killian curses under his breath while tossing his jacket to the floor, then ripping off his bow tie.

“You’re wet, beautiful girl?” He scrunches the silky material in his large palm.

“Y-yes,” she breathes out.

“Good.” Killian and I move together. I slip out of her for a moment, he rubs his bow tie on her dripping cunt.

“That feels—oh—that feels so good,” is the last thing Amara says.

Before Killian raises the soaked material and stuffs it between her plump lips.

Her choked sounds turn me into an animal. I flatten my palm on her thighs to press her back to my front. My hips buck, seeking her warmth. Her naked ass to my pants.

Let her ruin my pants. Let her destroy every fucking pair I own.

“My fingers are going to feel like nothing in comparison to what you’ll have there later.” I bury my fingers inside her again, stretching her. “You’re about to have two cocks stuffing you.”

Amara’s body jolts at the forceful invasion and the wickedness of my promise. Her instincts scream at her to run.

I hope she tries.

I hold her still, as does Killian. He grabs her by the shoulders, pushing her to me.

She takes it, feisty little thing. She’ll have a lot more to take soon.

“You missed a few words there, Carter.” Killian leans into her. He brings her pierced nipple to his lips. Sucks.

He follows it up by sliding his fingers to her pussy. Rubbing her. Rubbing me. Same deviant shit we’d done on our first night together.

She claws at Killian’s shoulders while we open her. Stretch her. Get her ready to have both of us in her tight hole.

“He’s right, A.” I grip her jaw with my free hand, my fingers splayed on her throat. She doesn’t fight me when I tilt her head up. Doesn’t complain that I’m not being gentle about it. “I did forget.”

Her pupils are dilated. Her pulse hammers beneath my fingertips.

And she doesn’t spit out Killian’s bow tie.

I drag my tongue along her cheek, kissing her where the bump on her temple used to be. I’m ravenous from her sweet smell and Killian’s blending into my nostrils. Killian joins me, tracing the length of her cheek, licking off my saliva.

His hungry tongue brushes the corner of my lips, then the sadist breaks off from us. “Go on.”

“In the same hole.” I add a fourth finger to her pussy. Tears well in her pretty eyes. She’ll thank me later. “You’re about to have two cocks filling your pussy.”

Killian groans, spanking her right breast, then the left. Looking at her like he’s a vulture and she’s a little mouse while she cries out into his bow tie. Those muffled screams are as hot as the ear-piercing ones. Her pain is fucking delicious.

“This is nothing, Amara.” Killian’s voice is hoarse. The evil gleam in his has precum leaking on my piercing. “I hope you realize that.”

“Mmm!” our beautiful girl whines.

She’s not hurting now. Not really. But it won’t be long before she will. I’m dying to fuck her. Own her. Possess her.

“You need us to stop, pinch either of us hard,” I grind out.

She nods, as much as my grasp allows her.

“Good girl.”

The praise doesn’t diminish the fear in her eyes. Fucking beautiful.

While Killian works his fingers inside her, he returns to her gagged mouth. Bites her upper lip, evoking more cries out of her. His tongue glides lower then, tracing the seam of her bottom lip before dipping between it and his bow tie. The one that’s soaked with her juices.

“Kill, come here.” I part my lips, already missing both of them on my tongue.

What little light has remained in his eyes dies out. Pitch-black darkness takes over. He crushes his open lips to mine, infiltrating my mouth with his tongue. He does evil things to my mouth with this tongue, with his lips. Makes my toes curl. He licks and assaults my tongue, and I taste him. I taste Amara on him too.

“Fuck.” I’m breathless when Killian releases me. I give Amara a harsh glare, and her glossy eyes meet mine. “A, your days of using toothpaste are over. You want to brush your teeth, you stick your hand in your pussy.”

“Or we’ll do it for you.” Killian’s fingers push impossibly deeper into her cunt. “Let’s take her to bed.”

“On it.”

We remove our fingers from her together. She’s still whimpering and breathing hard through her nose when I scoop her in my arms.

Spit dribbles from the corners of her mouth. A deep blush taints her soft cheeks. Amara’s feet dangle in the air, the soles curved in a beautiful shape, thanks to the heels Killian chose for her.

The heels stay while we fuck her.

“Your room?” I ask Killian at the bottom of the stairs.

“*Our* room.”

For a brief second, we exchange a heated gaze. The fire between us crackles. It speaks.

My eyes lower to the *O* that I carved into Amara.

Ours.

Ours.

Ours.

We climb the stairs, us first, Killian behind us. Amara, despite the drooling and labored breaths, is efficient at removing my bow tie. She tosses it in the air, and removes Killian’s bow tie, holding it in her small palm.

“Pretty little A.” I stop at the landing, taking his bow tie back from her and shoving it in her mouth. “Not so scared of two cocks tearing into your cunt?”

Her lips curve into a naughty smile around the black fabric. All the while, she doesn’t stop unbuttoning my shirt.

“In that case.” Killian pulls on her hairband, releasing her soft, blond locks. “We’ll skip lubing you.”

My maniacal grin slashes my face in half. Her eyes widen in horror.

We step into *our* bedroom, and Killian finally removes the fabric from her mouth. He sniffs it, growling. I make a mental note to steal it for myself later.

“Carter.” Amara scratches at my bare chest. “Do you hear me? I asked if __”

“Asked what, pet?” I throw her on the bed, prowling at her, smiling. My fingers go absentmindedly to my chest, grazing the broken skin she clawed at. “Or should I call you little beast?”

Her lithe body is quick to react. She straightens herself, her tits pushing forward. I zoom in on the redness around her pierced nipple.

“You’re going through with this, aren’t you?” Her voice is a mixture of fear and excitement. My eyes cut to hers. “Without lube?”

“Depends.” Completing the work she started, I shuck off my jacket and shirt. “You want us to?”

“Never gonna happen.” Shirtless Killian toes off his shoes, then unbuckles his belt.

He’s the picture of elegance and composure, even naked. His biceps bulge beneath his intricate tattoos. His dick pushes against his fingers as they work on his fly.

He’s completely naked when he shoves Amara to the bed, spreading her legs. I can’t help but stay in place and admire their naked bodies when he positions himself between her parted thighs. When I get the full view of his asshole.

He starts saying, “Begonias,” and finishes the word with a groan. Because my tongue is on his balls, my hands on his ass cheeks. I don’t stop there, sucking the sack, then sliding my tongue up to circle his rim.

Once, twice.

He loses control, slamming his throbbing cock into Amara. He thrusts into her, almost drilling her into the bed with how hard he pounds her. I

don’t let up, spitting on his clenched hole, giving this beautiful man pleasure by fingering him. One finger, then two as I jerk myself.

“Dammit, Carter,” he groans.

“More.” Amara’s nails dig into his biceps.

“You want more?” The muscles on his back flex. One of his hands fists Amara’s hair as he fucks her harder. The more his ass stretches for me, the harder she gets it.

Savage.

“You look so beautiful.” I find Amara’s hooded eyes dancing between us. My eyes stay on her as I pull out of Killian’s asshole, grab a wipe from the nightstand and clean my fingers. I fuck my hand slowly by the bed. “Getting railed like that. You think she can take more, Killian?”

“Yes.” With this one word, he slides one arm beneath her, lifting her back off the bed. Going deeper. Making her scream and claw at his tattooed arms. “Your cunt can take both of us, beautiful girl. Can take any fucking thing.”

“Such a good girl.” I move behind them, and Killian slows down. He pulls back, still inside her when I push two fingers inside, rocking them in tandem with Killian’s hips. “Such a dirty girl.”

“I’m—I,” she whines. “It hurts.”

Killian, who’s as sadistic as I am, resumes fucking her like he hates her. His balls slap on my hand while Amara’s pussy stretches for us.

“So wet.” I suck on my bottom lip, groaning at the sight of her juices dripping on my hand. Then I draw them out of her. “Maybe you won’t need lube, after all.”

“Let’s see.” Killian flips on his back, one of his hands gripping Amara’s ass firmly. Pinning her to him, so his cock remains deep inside her pussy.

His jaw is clenched tight. His abs strain as he continues rocking into her from under. I have no doubt he would’ve bitten a piece of her flesh if it wouldn’t cause such permanent damage.

So would I.

He grabs her cheek, his voice strained. “Ride me.”

She does. It takes her a moment, but our girl starts rocking on top of him, matching his pace. Grinding her clit on his body.

That won’t do. I grab the bottle of lube and get on the bed next to them. I’ll lube my cock later, but for now, I spit on my fingers, sliding my fingers between Amara and Killian’s sweating bodies. She grinds on my fingers,

her elbows bending. She's barely holding on, and that turns me on like no fucking other.

"Want to come, Amara?" While I keep fisting myself, I gather saliva in my mouth.

My tongue is full of spit when I hover over her small, pink asshole.

"Yes. Please."

"Want to come on Killian's cock with my finger deep in your asshole?" I push through the tight tissues.

"Yes, Carter, yes." Her asshole clenches despite her eager moans.

"I love hearing you say his name when you ride me," Killian's grip on her is punishing. "Say it again."

"Carter," she breathes at the same time I shove my wet finger inside her. "Carter!"

Her soft hair and bouncing tits stroke his stomach. Her ass pushes back to me, begging for the pain I give her.

"Greedy cunt." I slap her butt cheek, my palm leaving red marks that I know will stay there tomorrow. "Our greedy cunt."

"Come for us." Killian grips a few locks of her hair, pulling her lips to his. "Come on my cock, beautiful girl. Make yourself nice and wet before Carter stretches that tight little pussy."

Her screams shake the walls. Her holes squeeze us. Her mouth begs and begs and begs while she comes, until she's boneless and limp, falling on top of Killian.

"No, baby." I wipe my finger on the covers, then hoist her toward me by gripping her hips. "We're not nearly done with you."

She whimpers but lets me do what I want to her body anyway.

"Our perfect little fuck doll." Killian sucks on the crook of her neck, looking at me while he's talking to her. "Still want more?"

"Yes." She twists her head to me, and I've never seen anything more beautiful.

"You're getting it, then." I place my hand between her and Killian's faces. "Spit, now."

She does. Some of her saliva drips to Killian's collarbone, and he lets his pleasure be heard. Loud and motherfucking clear.

"Spit in my mouth, Amara," he orders.

She listens, our good girl. I lean on my dry hand to watch the string of her spit land in his open mouth. I get off on it. Amara does too, her pussy

clenching while I try to shove the throbbing head of my cock inside of her.

Killian savors the taste of her saliva, his cock jerking. Then he opens wide. I know what he wants. What he needs.

I always have.

“Suck your spit back, pet.” I spank her. “Suck Kill’s mouth dry.”

She kisses him, her cheeks hollowing, as she claims back her saliva. My cock presses a little harder, dripping with her spit and lube and eager to get in.

I almost lose my fucking mind from how tight she is. How hard he is.

“Give it to me.” I twist her head, claiming her mouth.

My lips coax hers open, demanding their spit.

Our doll. Our princess.

Ours.

I release her, moaning loudly as I swallow their spit.

“Good girl.” I bend to bite her cheek, pushing myself an inch inside. “You ready?”

“I—” Her voice breaks. “No.”

“We’ll make it fit.”

I conveniently forget to mention it’ll hurt like a motherfucker.

“I can’t.” Her body trembles.

“I don’t hear begonias.” The swollen tip of my cock begs to be inside her. My piercing grazes Killian’s shaft and forces the most delicious sounds out of him.

But I wait. For her, I fucking wait.

“No, I—it stings.” Her hole squeezes us. Tight and sinful.

“It’s going to burn, A.” I shove another inch in. “You’re going to be sore for a week. It’s a promise.”

“No, please.” Her voice trembles as if she’s sobbing.

My hand entangles in her hair, and I yank on it. Her back arches while her ass stays in place. Killian’s hands massage one of her tits, the other gripping her hip firmly.

She’s not crying. Her cheeks are dry. Her eyes taunting.

Killian takes hold of her face, stealing her from me. “Don’t be a brat,” he threatens, low and gruff.

“We can do much worse than fill you up,” I drive deeper inside her. “This? This is child’s play.”

Amara turns to me, forgetting the pain. Growling at me. She has every right to. I still slap her round beautiful ass before returning to push my cock inside her. Slowly. Ever so fucking slowly.

It takes every ounce of restraint in me not to tear her apart with my dick.

Except I want to hurt her, not traumatize her.

“Open up, pet.” Fighting her tight pussy, I rock myself in and out. “I’m almost all the way in.”

“I’m trying,” she pleads.

I tug on her hair, angling her face to mine. “Try. Harder.”

Her cunt relaxes, accommodating my girth. Both of ours. A sexy-as-hell guttural sound comes out of her when I bottom out in her pussy.

“Such a good girl,” I praise. “That’s it. That’s how you take it.”

“So good,” Killian tells her through clenched teeth.

His cock is thick, pulsating against me. The ridge of his head rubs on mine in the tight space of Amara’s sex. Our dicks touched before today. Amara jacked us off like that.

But being inside her together, it’s mind-blowing. Her hot, wet walls engulf us. Join us together. I don’t remember anything this good in my life. Anything this debauched and decadent.

Because I’m not just fucking them. I’m loving them.

Glancing at Amara, I can see she’s checked out so I press her head back on Killian’s warm chest. “My baby is flying high.”

“M-hmm.” Her teeth bite her bottom lip with the effort to take both of us. And through it all, she smiles.

“Carter,” Killian calls me. “On your back.”

He catches me off guard. I slow the rhythm of my thrusts, studying him.

Jesus, he’s so handsome with her beautiful cheek mashed into his chest.

“On your back,” he repeats. His dominating voice stirs me out of my daze. “I want to pound into her. With both of you beneath me.”

Her eyes light up at that. She likes the idea. I freaking love it.

I pull out, doing as he ordered.

“Come here, baby.” I help her sweet body off Killian and onto me. “Good girl, come sit on my cock.”

The sweat on her back dampens my chest. Her soft hair tickles my jaw. I revel in the feeling of being covered by her. My hands move to her breasts, fingers crushing her nipples.

“You have such beautiful tits.” Killian fists himself and lowers to lick a nipple I point at him. His tongue swirls around my fingers, my knuckles.

He doesn’t stay there.

He sits on his knees, lining his cock to her pussy.

“Carter was kind to you, wasn’t he?” His firm hand caresses her thigh then my balls.

“Very.” She twists to me, licking my jaw.

“You’re already nice and stretched.” He brushes his thumb over her clit, sounding ominous as fuck. “Ready.”

I don’t think she’s aware of what Killian means to do to her. I grin so wide I’m about to tear my cheeks.

“I am.”

“Good girl.”

The pressure of his cock on me feels incredible. All while being inside her.

“I’m going to fuck you like I hate you.” More pressure on my cock. More of Killian’s dark, unhinged glare. “I don’t.”

Killian shoves his dick inside Amara’s pussy. Filling her. Pulsing against mine. Owning us. Amara’s agonized, pleasured cry has the same effect on me as Killian’s cock does. It reaches straight to my balls, behind my eyes. I thrust deeper into her, setting off more cries from our Amara.

“Shh, you’re doing so well,” I tell her as Killian and I roll in and out of her trembling body.

I continue pinching and stroking her tits. Killian works her clit, calming her down while he’s pounding pleasure into her.

It takes Amara a while to adjust to our size together. To the stretch. Her tears drip on my chest. Killian licks whatever’s left on her cheeks. Eventually, she stops crying and shaking. The pain transforms into something better.

Her moans are less chopped, her hands finding my hair and stroking it.

“Beautiful girl.” Killian presses his chest to hers.

The kind words don’t mean he’s any less ruthless. Nothing like it. If anything, he grows crueler by the second. I sure as shit don’t let up on her, either. Watching how both of them react to my cock and my piercing is fucking intoxicating.

“Perfect.” He leans in to kiss her. His teeth bite and pull on her lips. “And you.” His dark brown eyes rise to mine. “You’re perfect.”

For the second time this evening, his words make my heart stop. His brutal kiss to my lips only makes me think that this is it, I'm dying. Fucking dying. Then I hear and see Amara latching onto Killian's neck, sucking on his skin.

We're our own little, fucked up family, and I….

Fuck, I'm there. I'm fucking there. "I'm going to come." My voice sounds foreign. Choked and raspy with need.

"Me too," they say together.

A feral growl is pushed out of my lungs as I explode inside her. My cum coats Killian's dick, and he thrusts his hips a couple of more times. He finally comes when Amara spasms on us, milking us dry.

Killian releases his weight on us. His arms embrace us, and we hug him back. Amara's hands are on mine, her cathartic tears spilling onto my chest.

"Are you okay?" My lips brush on her temple.

"Yes." She looks up at me, pouting. "But…"

Killian doesn't move a muscle. The two of them crush me, and I like it. I really like it.

"'But' what, beautiful girl?" Killian's voice is soft. Kind.

"I love you," Amara, having more balls than both of us combined, blurts out. One of her hands finds the side of my neck, the other one grips Killian's hair. "I love both of you."

I blink. My eyes glide up from her to Killian's darker ones.

Love.

Our hearts expand. His and mine alike. It's a weird fucking feeling. To love Amara. To be loved by her.

The best one ever.

The woman's courage fuels mine. "I do too. Love you. Both of you."

Not a part of me resents him for not showing Amara and me tenderness before we hooked up. Everything happened as it should. His ice-cold demeanor had shaped me into the man I am today. A warm, coddling approach would've destroyed me.

Thanks to Killian, I've learned to direct my violent tendencies.

I'm grateful. But I don't need his guidance anymore. I need his goddamn heart.

We eye Killian expectantly. Struggling. Human. There's no way he's getting out of here without saying those words, though.

"Well, what do you think?" he grumbles.

“He’s so cute when he’s grumpy, isn’t he?” Amara whispers through tears.

The last person who referred to Killian as cute is no longer among the living. She’ll find out, in the very near future, exactly what we did to him. If she’s okay with us running a hotel for criminals—with us beating people to a pulp when it’s needed—then she’ll definitely like hearing about *that*.

“Yeah, he is.” I chuckle, though it’s hard with their weight on me. “Care bear is kinda cute.”

“I love you.” His grim tone does a shit job to hide his feelings. Warm and freaking fuzzy. “I love you, Carter. I love you, Amara.”

He doesn’t wait for our response, only gets up, offering his hand to her.

Amara doesn’t need his hand. She tears herself from me, flinging her naked body into Killian’s.

Her arms circle his neck, her hands pulling him to her. “Love, like love-love?”

I perch on my forearms slowly to stare at them.

“You’re pushing it, beautiful girl.” He picks her up in the air, cradling her to his chest. I can see he’s struggling. I can also see his warmth. Our version of it, anyway.

Watching them together has my heart slamming against my ribs. This isn’t jealousy. It’s straight-up protectiveness. Possessiveness so toxic that it paints my blood black.

Love.

A stark reminder that I’ll do anything and everything to keep these two with me. Unharmed. Alive.

Mine.

Always mine.

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CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE

Killian

Three consecutive messages stir me from my dreamless sleep.

It's the middle of the night, seeing how dark it is outside.

Dark, but not pitch black. The city's lights permeate through the windows of our bedroom. Enough for me to steal another minute to watch the two people next to me before I turn to my phone.

Carter and Amara are so calm. At peace. He spoons her from behind, his arm hugging her torso possessively. His black hair is a mess. Her lips are swollen from the abuse of our harsh kisses.

And while his eyelids lie heavily on his gray eyes, hers aren't. As if she feels me staring, she blinks. Stirs awake. Her deep browns focus, then narrow at me. Mesmerizing me. Stealing my sanity right from under me.

"Killian?" Amara murmurs, her voice thick with sleep. "Everything okay?"

Her whispered question reminds me of my phone.

No, I don't think everything's okay. Phone calls and texts from Voltage this late are reserved for emergencies. There are work emails which I'm used to. Which I'm happy for at times because of my strange sleeping habits.

Phone calls and messages are different.

Our staff is allowed to call me anytime. Our members aren't.

The one who called me in the middle of the night to complain about room service lost his two front teeth. The cry-baby money launderer from room 3112 and his teeth became an urban legend. No one's done it since.

No one’s doing it now. Something’s wrong with the hotel.

“Everything’s fine,” I lie.

She hums when I kiss her forehead. Presses her palm to my cheek when my lips linger on her warm skin a moment longer.

The only other woman I kissed this way was Carter’s mom. Not out of the kind of love I have for Carter and Amara.

It was her pain that burned me. A woman holding a newborn on a street corner. One would have to be a monster to ignore her. To not want to give her a sense of normalcy.

Compassion. That was why I kissed Joelle’s forehead. It meant nothing. Kissing Amara’s and Carter’s means everything.

“Your beard tickles.” She giggles but doesn’t pull back.

I don’t either. Even in her sleepy state, even hushed, Amara’s giggles sound a touch psychotic. Her adorable kind of weirdness makes life less complicated. Less dark. The sun shines through every now and again around her.

Love seeps through the clouds and washes over Carter and me.

“Are you saying you don’t like it?”

“No.” Her whisper is harsh, her fingernails biting into my cheek so I won’t move an inch. “Mine.”

Another message from my phone cuts through my way-too-emotional thoughts.

“You lied.” Amara lets go of me, her attention drifting behind my back to the nightstand. “There is something.”

“No.” Technically, I’m not lying.

Wherever she’s concerned, everything’s okay. Always will be. Carter and I will make sure of that.

“Go back to sleep, beautiful girl.”

After a few minutes of stroking her hair, she falls back asleep. I slip out of the bed and grab my phone.

Five missed calls from Luna that I didn’t hear. Four messages. A curse slips past my lips. By the time I fell asleep, I was exhausted. I’ve been knocked out for two hours and now this mess.

I don’t even know what it is, but I know it’s a fucking mess.

My pulse speeds up as I press my thumb to the screen to unlock the phone and read.

Luna: *Boss, you up? It’s important. As in code fucking red.*

Luna: *The night shift called up to my room. There's been a security breach. Christopher shot one of our men, Michael. He's inside Voltage.*

Luna: *Killian, please, he's threatening them. Got his gun aimed at one of them. Saying he won't leave without talking to you. I'm physically blocking Julien from going down there and confronting him. He can't face this asshole by himself. Please pick up.*

Luna: *Killian? Please?*

Fuck. Fuck, fuck, fuck.

Me: *I'm on it.*

I get dressed at record breaking speed. Next, I stalk over to Carter's side, shaking his shoulder subtly. His eyes snap open, wide awake and ready for violence.

"What's up?" He sits up, throwing his feet to the floor.

Amara twists to face us. Another word, another noise, or the light from my phone shining in Amara's face, and she'll be up again.

I signal him with my thumb to step outside, mouthing one word. *Voltage*.

Faster than I did, he pulls on his boxers and pants. We're in our socks and shoes, throwing our shirts on, not wasting time lingering here and buttoning them. We can do it while we walk out of the room. We *need* to do it on the way.

"Luna called." Silently, I close the door behind us. "And texted. Jesus fuck."

"What?" Carter smooths back his bed hair, buttoning up.

"Boroughs."

The one word has Carter's lip curling in disgust. The voice reverberating from his chest is that of a rabid beast. We're protective as fuck. Will stop at nothing to take care of what's ours. Our hotel. Each other. Our girl.

Ever since that day at Voltage, Carter has insisted on going after Christopher. Killing him for how he treated Amara. Hiding his body where no one would ever find him.

I contemplated it. No, that's hardly accurate.

I *wanted* him to bleed. Have been craving to stand over his corpse. Spit on it.

Still, I decided against it.

That was Christopher's first offense. We beat him up. Revoked his membership. We couldn't risk making him disappear. It would've been way too obvious.

Fingers would've been pointed at us. Questions would've been raised.

They wouldn't wonder what Amara meant to us anymore.

They'd *know*.

That rationalization stopped Carter from slaughtering Christopher.

Had stopped him. In past tense.

Why couldn't the dumbass hitman just let it go?

Too late for that.

Christopher Boroughs is a dead man.

Carter keeps reeling at my side while I relay Luna's messages to him. We talk as we descend the steps, ignoring the smell of sex and sweat and a particular jasmine scent in the apartment.

We need to protect the hotel. Our status in the violent world we're a part of. Otherwise, we won't have many more nights like this one. We won't have each other.

We'll be stripped of anything, including our lives.

Unacceptable.

"He needs to be put down." Carter shrugs into his jacket. His statement is plain. Final.

Couldn't agree more. "He will."

Carter picks up the keys I dropped on the floor earlier this evening. He scoops Cyclone off the floor.

Then he straightens and turns to me. His eyes are as murderous as his grin. "Tonight."

My phone vibrates in my hand.

"Luna."

"Killian." She sounds horrified. Horrified and relieved.

Carter moves closer and I put her on speakerphone. Murderous energy vibrates from him to me.

"We're on our way." My fingers lift to Carter's neck, squeezing him.

He groans quietly.

"No need."

The roaring of my blood in my ears is loud. So loud that I think I'm not hearing her well. "What the fuck do you mean no need?"

"You said Christopher is there. In our hotel." Each word Carter says comes out harsher than the former. "He killed one of ours. He's threatening *our* staff. He's not getting away with it."

Carter grabs the phone. "Is he there, Luna? Threatening you?"

“No and no.” She sighs. “Christopher’s gone, Carter. He left. I sent three men, and I woke up two of our detectives to go after him, but he’s not here.”

“What?” My gaze shoots to Carter. He’s equally confused.

“He said he had a better idea on how to torture you both.” Her pause becomes a full stop as silence fills the line.

“Out with it,” I quip.

Luna sucks in a breath. “He asked to forward you a message. That you two better be looking over your shoulders. He’s coming for you.”

“Motherfucker.” Carter spins on his heel, breaking our contact.

Any threat that’s ever been issued to either one of us had made Carter laugh. I’ve always been the pissed-off one.

Neither of us is amused tonight. A man was murdered. Our girl’s in danger.

“You called Max?” Carter’s finger hovers over the screen, ready to call our main detective.

“I have. He’s on it. So are our cleaners. I’m sending someone to inform Michael’s family and will deposit the risk funds in their bank account. No need for you to come.”

My eyes drag over to the second floor. I don’t see blond hair peeking out. No *muffin* or *Killie*.

Amara is sound asleep in our bed, undisturbed by the shit we’re dealing with.

My heart’s grateful for the closed door that blocks Amara from listening in on this.

We have this. We have her.

But the days of her staying in the dark are over. We can’t afford to have her running around the hotel or the city. Telling her to stay away or having someone on her twenty-four/seven will raise her suspicions.

We owe her the truth.

Carter has to get how wrong he is about her. She won’t leave us for anything. I saw it in her eyes. And if she tries, we’ll just lock her here until she embraces our lifestyle.

We’re not letting her go.

I put this conversation off with him for later. Once we’ve done some serious damage control.

“Anything else, Luna?”

“Christopher asked to make sure that you know he’s coming for your perfect little family.” She pauses. I wait. “That by the time he’s done, no one will remember you or Carter ever existed.”

“We’ll see about that.” I seethe.

“What are you going to do?”

“We’ll get on it this morning. We’re going to find him.”

Carter and I look at each other. Our furious glares clash, setting the living room on fire.

“Then we’re going to make him regret the day he was born.”

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CHAPTER FORTY

Amara

I knew it. I fucking knew it.

While the men thought they were being oh-so-secretive, I caught them. I heard them. The low volume of the speaker wasn't as low as they'd have liked to believe.

Through the small crack I opened the door, the conversation had reached up to me.

Carter and Killian are much more than just hotel owners. They're as violent and murderous as the mafia men I saw tonight. I heard and watched their murderous thoughts bleed everywhere around them.

I don't mind the violence they promised to rain on Christopher. Don't care if they kill the guy or not. He's a bad man and I trust their judgment.

But I'm struggling. I trust them. Why can't they trust me?

Do they think I'll go to the newspapers? Tell someone I shouldn't?

I would be so turned on to be near them when they had their hands covered in blood or standing over a corpse.

As I lie back in Killian's bed—ours, unless it's another half-truth—I wipe a tear from my cheek.

It can't be it. They trust me, I'm sure they do.

My mind whirs back to the night the burglar broke into my apartment.

The man who attacked me hasn't returned. There's been no retribution.

With the information I have now, I can guess why. He must be dead. Carter killed him. He had to.

Carter, the man who rules over the lawless alongside his stepdad, Killian.

Maybe they're scared of my reaction. Of what I'd say when I find out I'm sleeping with men who kill people as part of their job description. Men whose lives are filled with crime and violence.

I don't hate it.

How could they think I would? They heard me giggling when they beat Christopher up.

They're fucking badass. And now I'm badass by association.

Think, Amara. Think. Before you run downstairs and yell at them, use your brain.

They were keeping me safe. Protecting from these people there. Hence why they've been driving me to and from work. Why we've been hiding our relationship.

Why they came at Christopher like that the other day, ready to annihilate him.

They're protecting me from the hotel's members.

Has to be it.

"Muffin." My tears of sadness morph into those of joy. "Killie."

A smile tugs at my lips. Serenity trickles into my heart.

They really love me.

This Christopher dude is the one that should be looking over his shoulder.

Because when they find him…

The asshole is dead.

My last thought before I drift back to sleep is that *I wish I could do something to prove to them I'm strong. That I can be aware of the danger and they can still be my saviors.*

• • • • • • • • •

I'm dreaming again.

Carter is spreading my legs wide open. I feel his hair on my thighs. His breaths are hot on my wet pussy.

His gray eyes hone in on me in the darkness while his fingers massage and part my pussy lips. He dips his tongue to my slit, pushing inside my sex. Licking up to my clit.

"Carter."

He doesn't answer in my dream. Only trails Cyclone's blade just over my clit, the cold metal making me shiver. His teeth nip the sensitive spot, then

his knife sends bursts of desire through me.

The other man worships my breasts. The man whose tongue circles my pierced nipple. Whose lips suck hard and mercilessly.

“Killian.”

He moves on top of me. His muscular legs brace me on either side of my face. His hand grips my chin, pinning it to my chest.

“Open up, beautiful girl,” he whispers. “Going to stuff your mouth with my cock. I need you.”

“I need to be inside you, too.” Carter’s mouth leaves my pussy, his knife discarded somewhere. “Fuck you until you’re boneless, pet. And I won’t stop there.”

I need them there, but in my dream, I can’t tell them that. So I whine in protest instead.

Carter cups my dripping pussy, my arousal soaking through his hand.

“No whining.” One of his fingers presses into where I’m desperate for him. “You’ll take what we give you.”

Killian smacks my lips with the crown of his cock. A salty bead drops on my tongue, and I swallow it greedily. His precum is mine. Let them call me a brat, I’m never giving it up.

“Dirty girl,” Killian whispers.

Why are they whispering in my dream? I don’t like it.

I want my growling, loud, and ravenous men. I want to go back to reality.

Pinching my eyes shut, I shake my head, willing myself to wake up.

“There she is,” Killian says above me.

His voice is a little louder than in the dream. His position is the same. The head of his cock is shoved between my lips. His muscular, tattooed arm leans on the pillow next to me. His eyes are blacker than the night outside.

Neither of them apologizes for mauling me in my sleep. They never do. I consented to it. Begged for it.

“Keep your lips just like that. Parted. Ready for me to fuck your mouth,” is his last warning before he pushes into me. “If you want us to stop, pinch my leg, remember?”

I’m still in the stages of waking up when he shoves every inch of him down my throat. My body, on the other hand, is very present. My nipples are pulled tight and my pussy drips down to my crack, on Carter’s hand.

And tears start falling. Wetting my temples. Soaking my hair. A sob escapes me, muffled by Killian’s cock.

It’s too much. After finding out what I did, I must still be overwhelmed. Even my unhinged soul has its limits.

“Shh.” Carter’s hand closes on top of one of mine. With his other hand, he penetrates me, fucks my pussy the way I like it. The way that makes me moan and clench around him. “It’s us, baby.”

“You take my cock so well,” Killian praises, his dirty blond hair falling on his forehead. He, too, fucks my mouth exactly how I need him to. “Always so eager for our cum, beautiful girl.”

My body and soul are soothed. A tiny bit. Enough to accept Carter’s body shifting until he’s between my legs and the head of his dick is pushed inside my pussy.

“You hear that?” he asks, his voice hoarse and teasing. “You hear Killian’s balls slapping on your chin?”

My eyes roam along Killian’s body. From his handsome, serious face to his chest, to the muscles in his stomach. They contract and flex as he pummels into my mouth. And the answer is yes. I hear him as well as feel him.

Thoughts about Voltage disappear from my mind. My confusion dissipates.

Hunger fills me. I hollow my cheeks, taking more of Killian. Swallowing him to the back of my throat. Gagging and slobbering for him. For them.

“She hears it,” Killian answers for me. “She fucking loves it.”

“Good.” I see Carter’s shadow behind Killian. “Because you’re going to hear mine, A.” He pushes hard, bottoming out. “And soon.”

I moan as much as Killian’s thick cock allows me. For a second there, I lose control of my teeth, and they graze the long, silky length of him.

“Oh, fuck,” he groans. “Dammit, Amara, you suck me so well. Good girl. Dirty fucking girl.”

I bask in his praise. Then I bask in the sound of Carter’s dick pumping in and out of me. Wet and slippery. Debauched and depraved. And right. Incredibly, perfectly right.

I orgasm hard, screaming on Killian’s cock, clenching on Carter’s.

“Begging for our cum.” Carter breathes hard as he slings both my feet over his shoulders. “Our cum slut is dying for us to fill her holes.”

“We’ll fill you up, Amara.” Killian’s cock hits me deep. I gag, choking on him, but he doesn’t stop. “You’ll have to work for it, though.”

“Yeah, you will.” Carter coaxes more needy sounds out of me by sucking my big toe.

The nerve endings there come to life, sending sparks throughout my body. I clench on him again, about to come a second time with how good it feels to have his piercing grazing my walls from the inside.

He pounds into me hard and slow. He still fucks me mercilessly as he places my feet back on the mattress. His cock still hits my womb every. Single. Time.

Even when his hands are on my breasts, cupping them. His head appears behind Killian’s shoulder, his lips sucking on the other man’s sweaty flesh.

Killian’s thick cock swells in my mouth. More of his precum leaks down my throat.

He’s close.

“I want to come together,” my black-haired daredevil demands. “All of us.”

“You think she’s earned it?” Killian glances over his shoulder.

Carter’s teeth bite on Killian’s lip. Killian laps his tongue out, tasting Carter. Tasting me on Carter.

“She’s been good.” Carter returns to his place. He grips my hips, thrusting relentlessly. “She can be bad. But she’ll always be our good girl.”

“He’s right.” Allowing me to breathe, Killian pulls out. My spit connects his tongue and my lips. “Always.”

The reprieve is short-lived before he thrusts into me again. The thrill from his forceful shove throws me into my second orgasm. My body ripples in waves, my heart soaring. The sounds and spasming of my body force my men to follow me.

Carter’s cum shoots into my pussy. Killian explodes in my mouth. So much that it spills out the corners of my mouth, leaking from my nose.

“Look at you.” Killian drags his cock back until it’s out of my mouth. His thumb gathers his cum from my chin, pushing it back into my mouth. “Filled up with our cum.”

There’s nothing soft about his expression or voice. Yet he’s sweet. In his special way, he’s sweet, commanding, and everything in between.

Much like Carter, who’s pulled out of me slowly. He comes to sit beside me, and I look at him.

“Beautiful.” This one word from him warms my entire body.

Every inch of me heats up. I’m beyond fulfilled. I’m complete.

They love me. They trust me.

They'll tell me about what happens at Voltage. I just have to prove to them how ready I am. How I'm excited about what else I might find.

About the things I'll be allowed to watch.

Carter's gray eyes interrupt my thoughts and take up my view as he leans in.

"Let's get you cleaned up before the shower." His tongue darts out, licking Killian's cum below my nose, from the corners of my mouth. From my chin.

"Mmm." He presses a kiss to my lips. "I'll never tire of tasting the two of you together. Never."

"You'll never have to." Killian sits next to me on my other side.

We kiss like that. We shower like that. We crawl back into bed like that.

"I don't think I'll be able to sleep," Carter mumbles.

"You could help him, you know." Killian cradles me from behind, running his fingers on my arm. "Sit on his face. I'm sure it'll make him fall asleep in no time."

"He'll like that," I say, my voice growing sleepy.

"I hope you'll like what we have for you even more."

I want to ask what. But my sneaky sleep steals me away.

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CHAPTER FORTY-ONE

Carter

I check my phone for the tenth time since I woke up.

Nothing.

"What's taking him so long?" My eyes roam over the food in the fridge before slamming the door shut. I'm not hungry. Not one fucking bit. "Christopher shouldn't be this hard to find. I'm going to fire Max."

"Calm the fuck down. It's half past six. In the morning." Killian's warm hand lands on my shoulder from behind. "Give it time. He'll find him."

"Time?" I twist to him, taking a step back. His touch is a distraction I can't afford right now. "Every second that passes, I'm closer to losing my mind."

Bare-chested Killian doesn't flinch at my tone. He levels me with his *Stop being a brat* glare. The same one I've known since I was a kid.

It won't work.

My fists clench, my fingernails bite into my skin. I grind my jaw and revel in the sound my molars make. That of hate.

"I need…" Red seeps into the corners of my vision.

I take a deep breath, inhaling the faint scent of Killian's cologne and the coffee he's holding.

A little better.

Who the fuck am I kidding? I'm nowhere near better.

"I need to slash into that motherfucker's chest. Carve out his heart." My voice is a low, menacing growl. "I need him to suffer. Cut his ear off and feed it to him."

“Carter.” Killian’s eyes flicker upstairs, where Amara sleeps.

The only person who can calm me long enough for me to fuck her. To love her.

“Only when he’s vomiting and having a seizure. When he’s crying for his mother,” I continue, ignoring the warning in his tone. “That’s when I’ll let it go. I’ll watch him die, and my laugh will be the last thing he hears. That’s what I need.”

Violating Amara, using my knife on her, it helped for as long as I was inside her. The thrumming anger beneath my skin nipped at me while I was sleeping. Wouldn’t let me rest.

By the time I woke up, my homicidal urges reached their peak.

No one threatens my family and gets to keep their life. Fucking no one.

“Cut it out.” Killian places his finished coffee on the counter. “For her. You have to calm down for a few more hours. We have the—”

“I will not calm down.” Cyclone is still up in our bedroom. I turn, stalk to our knife block, and grab another, inferior knife.

“Carter, we’re giving her the—”

Killian continues to try to talk some sense into me.

Truthfully, I don’t really hear any of it.

Blood rushes between my ears. The wrath in me seeks an outlet. I spin, spin, spin the knife between my fingers as Killian watches. He doesn’t take a step back, as most people would. I’ll never hurt Killian, and he knows it.

Three, two, one seconds pass.

Better.

I’m still mad, just not as deafened by the rage. Killian sees through me and prowls forward. One moment I have the knife, the other he steals it from me, slamming it back next to his coffee.

“He could see what she means to us,” I growl. “Every second he’s breathing means she’s in danger.”

Killian and I are practically bumping heads. Two bulls ready to fight.

“No one’s going to hurt her. Make no mistake, Carter, Christopher is a walking dead man.” The violence of Killian’s words helps to soothe me further. “We have people on him. Until then, we stick to the plan. We’re giving her the”—he whips his head back and then to me again when he doesn’t see Amara there—“shop. She deserves this happiness. Christopher won’t steal it from her.”

“We have a more important gift to give her.” I slam my palm at his chest. “Her safety. Her honor. Hand her his head on a motherfucking plate.”

“We will.” Killian’s brown eyes darken into a dangerous shade of black. “Or are you suggesting I don’t care for her safety?”

“I’m suggesting you don’t look as freaked out as I am about her going to work today.”

“Don’t I?” He grabs my hand, pinning it over his heart. It beats wildly. Like that of a madman. He releases my hand once he witnesses that I get it. “I care. I care about other things too. She’s been stressing over the shop for long enough. Luna’s wedding is behind us. We have everything set. This is happening, and it’s happening today.”

“He killed one of our own, Kill. It took guts.” Through my ever-growing cloud of rage, I remember this isn’t Killian’s fault. One person is responsible. Christopher. “He’s got nothing to lose. We have *everything*.”

Killian nods, backing off. I won’t apologize for getting in his face. Amara is helpless against the trained hitman. He’s stronger than her. More qualified at killing people.

He’ll catch and kill her. Unless we catch him first.

“You know as well as I do that he wasn’t just threatening us.” My brow furrows, my guts churning. “When he said he was coming for us, he meant her. He’s coming for us through Amara.”

Killian nods again, his expression grim.

“I already talked to Snake.” Our head of security, who is still owed a long talk regarding his failure. “He’s sending one of his guys to tail Amara. He’ll go undercover. But, Carter…”

His lips twist. I can tell it’s coming.

Deep breath. Don’t go for the knife. Patience, patience, motherfucking patience.

“You have to tell her.”

“Tell me what?”

Both our heads whip toward the woman standing on the landing of our second floor. Amara wears one of Killian’s plain black T-shirts, her blond hair an adorable tangled mess.

When she leans on the railing, her tits push against it. My eyes drag along her naked legs. Instead of wondering if she has her panties on, I worry how long she’s been up there.

She’s smiling. She should be mad that we were trying to hide something from her, but no. Our Amara is smiling. Her lips curve into a mesmerizing shape, and I smile back.

“Morning, beautiful girl,” Killian breaks the silence, his voice hoarse. He moves to stand next to me but doesn’t take his eyes off her.

“Morning.” She kicks her foot back, twirling a knotted lock around her finger. “What do you have to tell me?”

There’s a new edge to her voice. What did she overhear?

I’ll tell her about the blood we shed and the world we live in soon. I make a vow to myself that I’ll stop being such a chickenshit and tell her soon.

Just not today.

I’m sick with worry for her safety. I wouldn’t be able to handle her leaving us too.

Fuck that.

I’m winging it.

“Why don’t you come down here and find out?”

As if sensing what I’m about to tell her, Amara sprints down the stairs. Barrels toward us. We’re practiced in her manic runs and brutal hug attacks. We’re ready for her, our arms are open, one on each side. Our bodies stay firm when Amara clashes with us.

She tilts her head up to get her kiss from him, then me. She smells of minty toothpaste and *us*. Her love seeps through. I start thinking I might’ve imagined the change in her. Our manic little ray of sunshine.

“Well?” She puts some distance between us, bouncing on her toes. Her breasts bounce with the movement.

Tempting.

Later.

“Remember your jerk parents?”

That opening sentence lands me a surprised laugh out of Amara and an elbow to my ribs from Killian.

“He’s not wrong.” She rubs Killian’s shoulder. “They are jerks.

His gaze turns to her, the love in his eyes unmistakable. When neither of us speaks, Amara sniffs out his coffee. She nudges herself between us, grabs his mug, and sips the cold liquid.

“What about them?” Two gulps later, she drains what’s left in the mug. “They haven’t been taking my calls. Are they dead?”

The way she sounds hopeful. This girl never ceases to amaze me.

“They haven’t been available for a reason.” Killian cups the side of her cheek. “We warned them against it.”

“I—uh—um—what? Why?” Her startled gaze darts frantically between us. Then her lips purse. “I have to talk to them. They haven’t evicted me yet. When they find a buyer, though, they will. Killian, I have to know these things. This isn’t right. Please, tell them to call me. I need to—I have to—”

I stop her rambling by pinching her pierced nipple. This calms her. She gapes at me, quiet as her cheeks blush.

“You don’t need them for anything. You have us, remember?” I twist her nipple, and she shrieks. Beautiful. “We know what’s going on with the building. It’s been sold. Well, more like a given. As a courtesy gift.”

“To us,” Killian—who’s less *emotionally* sadistic than I am—rushes to tell her.

“To you?” she starts. “Why would they?”

This wasn’t how we planned on telling her. We planned to order takeout. Light candles. Make a big thing of it.

Plans changed the moment she caught us.

“We told them they’re assholes. Said giving you the shop would be a nice way to apologize for years of being a poor excuse for parents. They agreed. I forged your signature, and now it’s yours, pet.” I slide my hand beneath Kill’s T-shirt she’s wearing, grab her hip, and drag her ass back to us. “The building and hence the shop is all yours.”

“I…” She puts away the empty mug.

Killian and I remain quiet. Letting her process the news.

I’m not sure what I expect. For her to run off and call Opal? Be mad at us for throwing money at her? For forging her signature?

“I don’t have to talk to them anymore?”

Killian brushes her hair back. “Unless you want to.”

“No, she can’t.” My answer is firm and definite. “They’re done. Out of the picture for good.”

“For real?” Her face betrays nothing.

She could cry and beg to talk to them for all I care. My reply still would be, “Yes, for real.”

Three.

Two.

One.

Her scream pierces our ears. In the best kind of way. Unable to contain her excitement, she jumps into our warm bodies again. Killian recovers fast, gripping her hips, twists her to him, and lifts her in the air. Her bare thighs lock around Killian's waist, her fingers clawing at his scruff.

I'm not jealous. He has her now. I'll get her kinky little ass the next time.

We've got a lifetime of madness together.

"You're happy?" I stroke her hair, and she turns her head to me.

"You made my fucking year." She reaches out to me, and I bite her on her delicious fingers. This makes her smile widen. "Both of you. Thank you."

"You're welcome." Killian carries her to the island, lowering her there. "You won't have to worry about being evicted ever again. The other apartments are also yours to do with what you please."

"I'll pay you back," she promises us, her voice vehement. "For your trouble. How much?"

"No." Killian's no-nonsense voice means it's fucking final.

"Why not? If she insists…"

They both turn to look at me. Killian glowers. Amara's eyebrows shoot up, her eyes focused, ready to memorize the number.

I return them a wicked smile.

"You let us bind you with a chain from the ceiling. Do everything and anything we'd like."

Amara's eyes narrow. And darken. "Still doesn't sound like I'm the one paying you back."

"That's as far as we're willing to go." Killian fixes the hard-on in his sweatpants while checking the clock in the kitchen. "We'll be depositing last month's rent back into your account."

Her brows furl. "I thought my parents cashed it in?"

"We might or might not have persuaded them to wire it back to us." I loop one of her locks around my finger. "Hence, to you. We just held on to it for as long as it was a secret."

"I don't want it. Keep the money. Like an attorney's fee." She pouts when I shake my head. "It's too much. You guys are too much."

"You're ours." Killian grabs her cheek, his fingers pressing into her soft skin. "We take care of what's ours. Besides, we believe in your shop. We know you'll do incredible things with it, and we want to be there when it happens. No more arguing, then. Understood?"

She considers his words. I watch her brain in action, her rapid blinking as she figures out what to do next. While scrunching her nose.

"You're nervous," I note, tugging on her bottom lip. "You shouldn't be. The shop is yours, no strings attached. But it doesn't mean you can ever get away from us. If you'd ever consider leaving us, though, I'm hunting you down, A. You'll be our prisoner until you realize you belong with us."

She wraps her fingers around mine, whispering, "Is that a promise?"

"It's a vow." Killian kisses the top of her head. "We'll talk more this evening. After work."

Work. Christopher.

Amara's joy has erased my earlier worries.

I don't even want to go out there and slaughter Christopher. Just stay here for fucking ever.

But we have a hotel to run. A Christopher to kill.

It hurts to stop touching her. Them. We do it anyway.

"Wait." Her lips pinch together, arms crossed over her chest.

"Yes?" Killian cocks an eyebrow.

"Is that *all* you have to tell me?"

My heart jackhammers in my chest. The blood drains from my face.

She heard us. Every word.

No. I refuse to believe that. I'm not bringing our hotel up, either. Killian was right, I need my mind clear to handle Christopher.

"You're riding with me today," I fill in the tense silence.

She opens her mouth, then slams it shut. "Okay."

I'll figure out what's going on. Maybe she's trying to gather the courage to tell *us* something.

Maybe she's pregnant.

Maybe our semen gave her pills a big fuck you.

A son or a stepson slash stepbrother. We could have that. With her.

Fuck, I want that.

I want a ton of those.

We'll have them. A million kids.

Soon. Soon, soon, soon.

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CHAPTER FORTY-TWO

Amara

Carter thinks I'm pregnant.

He's driving me to work, and I've already caught him checking out my stomach a handful of times. With a grin stretched on his handsome face.

He wouldn't see me swelling beneath my neon-green maxi dress.

It's too early. And anyway, I'm not pregnant. I have cramps. I'm about to get my period any day now.

I don't tell him that.

My sweet man.

My deceiving man.

Hiding secrets goes both ways.

I scrunch my nose at that. My resentment doesn't sound right in my head. It comes off as ungrateful.

They've just done this huge thing for me. Claiming my shop and the whole building from my parents. Every tile. Every window. They're mine.

Thanks to them.

A million more flowers sold wouldn't have afforded that.

They love me. I love them.

There's no place for pettiness between us.

Besides, they'll spit it out soon enough. Once I prove to them I'm a badass who can tackle everything. Who can stomach blood, guts, and gore.

Actions speak louder than words.

I'll go through with my plan today. After that, there will be no more secrets between us.

I'll threaten to cut their balls in their sleep if they even think about hiding something from me ever again.

"Carter."

We're five minutes from Carnations, sitting in traffic. His eyes are trained on my belly. Again.

Cradling his jaw in my palm, I whisper, "You're wrong."

His brows scrunch, and he lifts his gaze to mine. "When have I ever been wrong?"

"Never." I sneak a smirk his way. "This time, though, you are."

He's silent. Holding back. Sneaky man. I so fucking love him for that. Even when it means he's hiding shit from me, he's cute. Because he's doing it to protect me. I'm sure he is. And I could never resent him for that.

"There's no baby in here." I make a show of pointing at my belly.

He groans. "Are you sure?"

"Yup. Absolutely."

As soon as I start patting my belly, the cars ahead of us start to move. Reluctantly, Carter tears his stare from me and inches forward with them.

"Would you have liked it?"

"A baby?" He half twists his head to me, cocking an eyebrow. "Fuck yeah."

This is news. We haven't discussed the idea. I never thought Carter would be up for it.

For starters, we're young. Then again, he only told me he loved me less than twenty-four hours ago.

He's never mentioned anything remotely close to babies. But he is now. I would love nothing more than to have his and Killian's babies.

They would be so loved. So cared for. They'll be ours.

Now I'm the one plagued with images of our future children. Carter chuckles at our baby's poop when changing their diaper. Whispering to them that nightmares are a good thing because kicking monsters' butts is fun. They'd force smiles out of Killian. Laughter, even.

"You two would make amazing fathers." I stroke Carter's bicep.

"You don't have to say that." His muscles strain beneath my hand, his teeth grinding. "It was just a thought. Forget I mentioned it."

This insecure look doesn't suit him. At all.

"Hey." My fingers run up to his hair, brushing the soft strands. "With you two as their dads, our children will be badass. They'll inherit your smiles.

Killian’s scowls. They’ll be perfect. You’ll be perfect.”

We arrive at my shop. *My* shop, I have to remind myself.

Focus, it’s about Carter now.

He pulls over, looking at me with hopeful eyes. He’s all-powerful, and yet he lets his softer side slip. For me.

“I’ll go off the pill tonight.” I twist to him, making sure he sees I’m telling the truth. “That’s how much I want it with you. Both of you.”

Carter leans in to grip either side of my face before crushing his lips to mine. His kiss consumes me, rattles me from the inside out. Rocks my fucking world.

When he draws back, he smiles, and so do I.

“A family.” I sigh, cradling my stomach.

“A family.” He covers my hands with his.

We’re having a moment, one we’ll share with Killian when we get home. I don’t want to ruin it.

I literally can’t, because I’m two seconds from bursting into tears.

“That sounds…” Goddammit, my chin wobbles. “That sounds amazing, Carter.”

“It will be,” he says.

I believe him. Like he’ll believe I’m a badass. That I love everything about him and Killian.

We only have to get through today—and we will—then we’re golden.

Nothing will stop us. Never again.

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CHAPTER FORTY-THREE

Amara

Christopher the jerk: *I'm here. Where are you?*

He's waiting for me next to room 5009, what used to be his room. Good thing they haven't assigned it to anyone else yet. That could've put a dent in my plan. Would've destroyed my chance to prove my worth to Carter and Killian.

The part of getting his phone number was, in Carter's words, child's play.

After a couple of hours of digging, ta-dah—his website popped up. He had nothing on there but a *Contact Us* form. So, I did it. I contacted him. He emailed me back, and I informed him how to sneak into the hotel through the private elevator Killian and Carter use.

I also instructed him to wear a hoodie so he wouldn't be spotted.

The hotel will probably get alerts when Christopher's old room is broken into. By then, I'll already have the fucker on his knees, holding my fake gun to his head. I'll smile so wide while my two men barge in and end his life for real.

All of that's about to happen. I walk through the hotel's hallway, the hood of my black oversized hoodie hiding my identity. I brought it to the shop in my bag so Carter wouldn't find out I'm being sneaky.

That way, Christopher won't doubt me. He'll believe my story, how I hate Killian and Carter.

As I stand by the door to his room, I push the hood back down. My smile is wide as I find the security camera for two whole seconds. Just as fast, I hide my face again and twist to the door with the golden numbers on it.

5009.

My fingers curl around the fake gun in my hoodie pocket. I bought it after the guy broke into my apartment.

Not bothering to reply to his text, I knock.

Asshole opens up quickly, wearing a black hoodie and black jeans. Just as I instructed. Poor idiot is so eager to kill me that he'd do anything.

"Christopher."

"Amara." He beckons me to step inside and closes the door behind me. "Thought you got cold feet, pretty toy."

Before I take another step, his disgusting fingers are already on me. Pushing my hoodie back. Stroking my hair.

Operation Swallow Bile is set in motion.

"I would never. Bail on our secret date?" I bite my cheek from the inside. It's better than biting his fingers off. "It'll make the two assholes who run this place so mad for violating their code or rules or whatever, right?"

"Yes." He inches closer. "You know why *I* hate them. You, though? I thought you were their precious little princess."

His cologne defiles my nostrils. The sight of him is offensive to my eyes.

"I've never been their princess. Just their supplier. Not even that anymore since they terminated my contract as of last night."

"Have they?"

"Yes, I told you they have." Clearly, it's a lie. But then I think of Georgia, and well… "Said they got a better offer from this bitch Georgia and her bitchy flowers. That's why I'm here. That's why…"

"Yes?" His slimy tongue darts out to lick his bottom lip.

"You and I will have lots of dirty sex here tonight." I run a finger over his shaved jawline that feels like touching an eel. "Burn, break, destroy what's theirs. What do you say, big daddy?"

The need to vomit is present. Good thing Carter and Killian have done a decent job at training my gag reflex.

"Sounds like something I'd like." He tightens his grip on my hair, pulling violently. "Too good to be true. What's the catch?"

I don't flinch or squirm. My attention is focused on the heavy fake gun in my hoodie pocket. On my goal. One wrong move and this platinum-blond-haired fucker could call my bluff.

"No catch."

“Not good enough.” His pale blue eyes glimmer cruelly. “Why are you doing this? You fucked them both and they found out you’re a cheating whore?”

Relief washes over me. This is one of the questions I’ve been preparing myself for.

“I’m not a cheater.” I tip my chin up as much as his punishing hold allows.

“Fine. Then option two. They were done passing you around like the meaningless cunt you are and got bored.”

His words would’ve stung. Except neither of my men think I’m meaningless. We’re in love. A sentiment Christopher probably hasn’t shared with a soul in his miserable life.

He won’t ever feel it, either. This is where he dies.

Here. Today.

Until that happens, though, I have a part to play. Gotta fake my reactions.

I pout, forcing my chin to wobble and my eyes to cry.

“I’ll take that as a yes.” He smirks, smug as fuck.

This is a win for him. For his bruised ego. His forehead might’ve healed, but the scar is deep inside his soul. A constant reminder of what a loser he is.

“Mm-hmm.” I bob my head, wiping the tears as if they annoy me. “I want to hurt them back. To have our sweat and your cum”—*gross!*—“on the sheets of their precious hotel. On the floor. Everywhere. Then, as I said, we trash the place. Tell me you don’t want the same.”

The air changes around us as soon as the words leave my mouth. I sense it the second it happens. I’m more than a revenge fuck for him now. He’s turned on by the images I’ve planted in his head. He’s looking forward to having sex with me.

Meaning, I have him by the literal balls.

“I see.” The evil lurking behind his eyes is on full display now. “Well, then. I’m going to grant you your wish. Bury my cock deep inside you. Make you bleed and come for hours while they think it’s just another member fucking a whore in this room.”

Yuck. Triple, quadruple yuck.

“Yes.” Talking time is over. Carter and Killian should be here any minute, and I have a show to put on. “I’m up for anything. Any-fucking-thing.”

“Good.” His hand slithers to my neck, squeezing it while he pushes me to the wall behind me.

“Good what?” That he has a condom to fuck me with? That he called in sick for the day? His eyes give me nothing.

The vilest smirk known to man crawls up his lips. His hold around my throat is suffocating. My gut churns. Alarm bells go off in my head.

I thought he’d agree to revenge sex. That he’d be eager to get rid of his clothes, strip for me, and then I’d have him.

Apparently not.

Despite the risk of blowing my cover, I close my fingers on the gun in my pocket. If he plans on knocking me out and fucking my unconscious body, the bastard has another thing coming.

“Good thing I brought reinforcement.” He shoves me harder against the wall, knocking my head on it.

“Reinforcement?” I scowl, ignoring the pain.

“You’re the one who’s asked me to ruin my old room.” Dread constricts my throat as he leaves me for the door. “And with his help, we’ll do just that.”

Time slows when Christopher locks his fingers on the handle and pushes it down.

Another familiar face walks in. A man who’s shorter than Christopher, about five feet tops. His blond hair pokes out from under his hoodie. His blue eyes are filled with hate.

“Preston, my loyal accountant. Meet Amara.”

He rubs his hands before loosening his striped brown tie. “Let’s get this party started.”

Oh, it’s a party they want?

I’ll show them a party.

The best and last party of their lives.

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CHAPTER FORTY-FOUR

Carter

“Carter.” Killian’s hand locks around the collar of my shirt, yanking my ass off the chair. “Wake the fuck up.”

He’s in my face, shaking me. Yelling. Doing everything he can for me to snap out of it.

I have to. Except my rage is too violent. My rage has sent me into a state of shock.

They’re in there with Amara. *Our* Amara.

We’ve just watched the recap of her smiling at the camera after Christopher had, then Preston. I’d recognize their gait anywhere. Knowing everything about our members is a part of my job description.

The maddening feeling paralyzes me. Has my muscles locking up. Turns me into a statue.

My brain functions. I hear Killian calling my name. I’m aware that we have to charge up there and stop this whole…

What the hell is this?

When Luna called us from the security room, telling us flower girl was here, I thought she was hallucinating. The guy watching the security feed must’ve confused Amara with someone else.

But once I opened the feed on our phones then came here to see the recap with my own two eyes, I believed it.

“Carter, I’m giving you one second, then I’m gone,” Killian barks, his dark eyes now black. “Do you hear me?”

“You need me to join you, boss?” I hear Snake, who’d been called here.

“You? After this colossal fuckup?” Killian looks over his shoulder, his voice low and terrifying.

Snake is our new giant, bald, and tattooed head of security. Giant as in taller and far wider than either Killian and me.

He could snap Killian in half. Crush his skull with his boot.

He doesn’t. He flinches, bowing his head.

“After she left her shop and your guy wasn’t on her ass?” Killian snaps.

“Boss, I’m sorry, she must have—”

This isn’t typical Killian Snake’s talking to. Even in my frozen state, I see what his rage does to him. Killian has had a switch flipped inside him, transforming him into a killing machine.

His voice is venomous. His muscles flex, stretching his jacket. The vein in his neck bulges. He’s primed to murder someone or someones.

He also makes our connection to Amara really fucking evident.

And neither of us cares about appearance when she’s not safe.

“Don’t you dare blame her for your incompetence,” Killian’s roar shakes the walls of the small security office. “You’re staying here in case shit goes down. Then we’ll discuss if you still even have a job anymore. Carter!” Another bark.

With Amara gone, there’ll be no more sunrises. No crazy smiles to match mine. No one to cook dinners alongside Killian.

No one to squeeze between us at night.

No muffin. No Killie.

Un-fucking-acceptable.

My body jolts to life at that. I shake Killian off, eating up the space of the security office, and storm out the door. I hear Killian chasing me until he materializes at my side by the elevator.

They’re slow. Fucking useless.

“Stairs.” I swerve to the right, bursting through the door.

Killian’s right behind me. “What the hell is she doing up there?”

“What do you think?” We reach the second floor, not slowing for one fucking second. “She heard us. She heard we were being threatened, and now she’s taking matters into her own hands. With a hitman.”

I’m already making plans for after we rescue her—because we will.

Some hotels don’t have a thirteenth floor. We’ll close down the fifth.

“I knew it.” He doesn’t sound breathless as we reach the third floor. Just mad. Most likely at himself. At me.

Join the club.

“The *Is this all you have to tell me?* question.” I fish out Cyclone, snapping the blade out. “We should’ve known.”

Killian has his hand on our master keycard. Between my knife and his fists, we’re good to go.

“Why call them here, though?” he asks. We storm into the hallway of the fifth floor. “Why not our penthouse?”

Burn. Burn. Burn. I’m not leaving this floor unscathed. It has to go.

“They would’ve never showed up at our home. My guess is she wanted to end Christopher and gain our respect. Fierce little thing.”

I’ll spank her so hard. I know I will because she’s alive. She’s alive and unharmed. Has to be.

“We *do* respect her.”

“Of course we do, but she’s a stubborn-ass woman. She’s had it with being in *our* apartment. With how it’s *us* who gave her back her shop.” We round the corner, breaking into a run. Anything but to slow down and think about what they might be doing to her. “Then we kept the hotel a secret from her. It was the final straw. She’s had it with being dependable.”

“Makes sense.” There’s no venom in his voice. No *I told you so*. I’m not surprised. He’s the one who taught me to be that way.

Besides, we don’t have time for that. We’re here.

Killian passes his keycard and we push inside the room.

I’m an anaconda. Violent. Angry. Ready to strike.

I don’t.

Neither Killian nor I do.

We don’t have to.

“Carter, Killian.” Amara beams at us.

She has a gun in her grip—a motherfucking Smith & Wesson. Amara’s pointing it at Christopher and Preston. The pathetic bastards kneel on the floor before her, their hands bound behind their backs. Both looking up at Amara, then at us.

Who is this woman?

Amara Grace Carmichael grew up sheltered. As much as her parents didn’t like her, they didn’t let her wander around. There was always

someone to look after her. A driver, her apartment building's security guy. The private schools she attended.

Later, when she moved to her apartment downtown, she trusted things would be fine. She didn't even own pepper spray.

And now a gun?

I look at her, at this very perfect, psychotic moment. Beautiful in her neon green dress. Her hair is as wild as her brown glittering eyes.

Amara is the sexiest, most badass woman I've ever come across. Her unconventional way of handling our secret is the sickest, hottest thing.

She's our cute, compliant woman. Our adorable, dirty little cum slut.

But this part of her… Damn, I wouldn't mind letting her roleplay every once in a while.

How could I ever think she'd hate what we do for a living?

I'm in love all over again. A teenager with hearts in my eyes.

"Amara, beautiful girl, we hear you loud and clear." Killian outstretches his arm for her. Not for the gun. It doesn't scare him. He wants Amara to be happy, to feel loved. "You know about the hotel. About us. And you're strong enough to handle all of it. We shouldn't have doubted you."

He doesn't care if anyone finds out about us anymore. First, he unleashed the beast in him in front of everyone in the security room. Now this.

Obviously, neither Preston nor Christopher will be getting out of here alive. They won't gossip.

However, something tells me Killian would've said the exact words no matter what.

He wants her safe. He wants to be her protector. He wants her in his arms.

I want these things too.

And these assholes keep staring at her as if she's on the menu.

"It's okay. I understand why you kept it a secret." She wags the gun as she speaks, and Preston lets out a pleasured groan.

"You shut the fuck up," I snap. I don't move, though. Don't come at him. I enjoy watching her like this way too fucking much. "Eyes on the floor, both of you."

They obey, and Amara continues, "I needed you to see you don't have to hide things from me. I love killing the bad guys. I love that you own them, that everyone respects you here. Thing is, if I said that, you wouldn't have believed me. So I did this." She smacks Christopher's head with the barrel

of her pistol, giggling when he winces. “Now you see me. And you’re free to end their lives. I can’t wait.”

I bite on my bottom lip while playing with Cyclone. I can’t wait either. Can’t wait to hear more of what she has to say. Can’t wait to see her pistol-whip them again.

“We do see you.” Killian opens up his other arm, beckoning her to him. “Come here, love. We’ll take care of them.”

“No, no, no. You stay right there, pet.” My voice is hoarse. “You look hot as shit. Don’t move.”

“Thank you, muffin.” She sends me an air kiss with the hand holding the gun. “I’ll stay if you promise they’ll suffer. He”—Amara waves the gun at Christopher—“threatened to kill us. I heard you last night.”

“We figured you did.” Killian shoots her a rare half-smile.

“You’re fucking smiling, Killian?” Christopher growls when he hears Killian’s amusement. “You never—”

The humiliated hitman doesn’t finish his sentence. I step up behind him, kicking his back. He collapses to the floor, right on his face.

He growls in pain. I smile.

“This one”—my little pet ignores us, gesturing at Preston—“he tried to rape me.”

Killian and I step toward Preston. Her words make it so neither of us is entertained anymore. Killian punches him in the nose. I’m quick to grab the sobbing man by the hair and press Cyclone’s shiny blade to his ear.

“You did what, fuckface?” While I talk, I slide the knife down, slicing into his ear. Starting to peel it off his ugly face.

“Ooh, he’s peeing, Carter.” Amara jumps up and down.

I shoot a glance at her, winking even before I check on the gun. When I do, I find she aims the barrel to the floor. So considerate, our woman.

“Can I kick him?” She bats her eyelashes at me, then Killian. “Please?”

Killian barks a laugh, stepping aside, giving her what she’s asked for.

“Have at it.” I hold him in place for Amara.

“No,” Preston, with his half ear cut off, cries. “Help.”

Christopher turns to his side, wiggling his body to where a broken vase shard is. Amara must have used it to neutralize the men.

“No, you don’t.” Killian rounds Amara and is on Christopher in a matter of seconds, crushing the hitman’s head with his shoe. “Stay, dog.”

He does. He has no other choice.

“My turn?” Amara looks at me expectantly.

“Yes, baby.”

The words barely leave my lips before Amara kicks Preston in the balls.

“Ow!” Preston mewls, trying to fold in half to shield himself.

“Good girl.” I straighten Preston for her a second time. His ear, half connected to his head, jiggles with the movement. “More?”

“Nope.” She places her hands on her hips, the gun still pointing down. “You two do it. This is the final part of my plan, so…do your thing.”

“I’m sorry. It was all Christopher.” Preston’s chin wobbles, slobber running down his chin. Chickenshit snitch. “He said the cunt asked for—”

I cut off his ear in its entirety. Straight through. His screams are music to my ears. Amara’s wide grin is one big dose of serotonin shot into my veins. As is Killian’s approving look.

“Why? Why?” Fueled by his terror, Preston manages to free himself from the shoelace Amara has tied around his wrists.

I hadn’t noticed she used her shoelaces to tie them up. Now I do, and fuck, how my cock jerks at the new images that flash before me. Her pointing her gun at them so they’d remove them from her sneakers. Making one man tie the other than doing the job herself.

“Carter!” she yelps while I’m lost in the fantasy.

Blinking, I watch as Preston grabs the gaping hole. He wretches, his last meal gushing from his mouth to his shirt.

“You’re not getting away.” I restrain his hands, pulling him up. “Never.”

“Give me my ear back.” His wails are garbled with all the puke still in his mouth. “Please, give it back. Let me go.”

“Would you look at this guy?” My hands are on Preston, but my gaze dances between Amara and Killian. “Thinks he’s getting out of here. Or getting a swift, merciful death.”

“No,” Amara growls.

Killian reaches out for her hair, tucking a lock of her hair behind her ear. “I’m falling in love with you all over again.”

Her pout morphs into a toothy grin. “Really?”

“Yes, really.” Killian stands in all his glory on top of Christopher. “Are we forgiven?”

“I’m not mad,” Amara answers him over Preston’s shrieks. “I figured you’d been protecting me from this life. That you thought I’d leave you. I can’t be mad at that.”

Then she whips her head back and forth between us, baring her teeth. “No more secrets, though.”

“No more,” Killian promises.

Preston’s screams start to ruin the moment. I throw him on the floor, using a wipe from my pocket to clean my trusty Cyclone and shove it in my pants pocket.

I bend to grab his ear, haul him back up to me, and stuff it into his screaming mouth. My hand slams his nasty lips shut, and I don’t care. I have more wipes to clean the fucker off me.

“No more,” I tell Amara, more pacified now.

“Thank you.” Amara sighs.

Preston gags and gags, fighting to spit his ear out. However, with my hand plastered on his mouth, it’s highly unlikely his ear is going anywhere.

“We would’ve come clean eventually. Swear.” My whole body works hard to restrain Preston. But my face is soft. For her and Killian. “I had a cage ordered for our old room, in case you tried to run once we did.”

“Baby.” She drops the gun, speeding toward me. She almost tackles me and Preston to the side as she throws her hands around my neck. “It’s one of the sweetest things anyone’s ever done for me.”

“I’m happy you’re happy, beautiful girl.” Killian joins us, caressing her messy hair. “You’re so special. So very special.”

His dark eyes dart to mine. He’s amused and turned on in equal measures. Of course he is. He’s thinking about caging me there alongside Amara.

I don’t hate that idea. Don’t hate it at all.

“This is the nastiest grooming, twisted shit I’ve ever seen,” Christopher utters. “No wonder you’ve been keeping it a secret. Sick fucks.”

Crack.

Killian bashes the unbroken vase into Christopher’s head. Water and flowers spill over his face and he coughs and groans from the pain.

“You’d do well to refrain from calling me a pedophile.” Killian leans in close to Christopher’s face who wriggles, trying to break free. “I won’t be as forgiving as Carter. If you mess with me, you’ll be chewing on your ear. You’ll be taking hearty bites on it before swallowing.”

Christopher has the brains to shut up. His eyes are still full of rage, an issue Killian appears extremely keen to fix.

“You’re angry, huh?” Killian hoists Christopher up to his knees, twisting his body to face Amara. “Imagine how we feel. Finding you here, hearing

you planned a gang rape in our hotel. Can't say I'm pleased, Christopher."

It's the only type of criminals we don't let in. Sexual offenders. Murderers, drug dealers, white-collar douchebags—we let them in, happily.

Child molesters, rapists, human traffickers—we don't simply deny their application. We make them disappear. It's been three years since we had any of those monsters apply.

"She's the one who asked me to fuck her," Christopher dares to repeat what the now-vomiting Preston had. "She contacted me. It was all her."

Killian delivers three hard blows to Christopher's cheek and jaw.

Another wave of Preston's puke runs down my hand. I'm not squeamish, so it's easy to leave my hand right where it is for a little over ten seconds. When I'm sure some of his vomit went back down his throat, I throw him on the floor.

While he hurls his ear and more of his stomach contents, I rise to my feet, fishing for another wipe. I always have two or three there. Just in fucking case.

After I clean myself from Preston's saliva and vomit, I turn to Amara.

"That's how you lured him?" Killian beats me to the question. "With sex?"

"It's hot as hell, but Amara, what were you thinking? You could've been hurt." I pounce on her, my hand grabbing the side of her neck. "They could've grown a pair and attacked you despite the gun. We might've missed you on the cameras."

"I had to lure him here, somehow." She smooths down her dress, calm and confident and magical. "I told him I was after revenge sex in your hotel. To make you mad. It worked. This isn't even a real gun, and they still fell for it. Cool, right?"

Jesus fucking Christ. A plastic gun.

I'm furious. I'm two seconds from thrusting her into the cage for a full month to teach her a lesson.

I'm also throbbing in my pants. My piercing grazes my boxer briefs. Her willingness to run headfirst into danger and actually loving it… Damn.

"You are by far…" I wipe my filthy hand on my jacket, gripping her chin and tilting her head up to me. "The most deviant, perfect little thing. I'm dying to fuck you. Be inside you. Anywhere in any hole. If you tell me you want my dick in your ear, baby, that's where I'll put it."

"What the fuck?" I hear Christopher behind me.

Next, the sound of Killian's fist connecting to his face echoes in the room. Such a satisfying crunch.

Preston, unlike his associate, doesn't make a sound. He's dead. Has to be.

I don't care about either of them. I'm waiting for Amara's response. She's studying me, breaking from my hold to give Killian the same scrutiny.

When she seeks my gaze again, specks of gold glitter in her brown eyes. "I'll remember your ear promise, Carter."

"Where can I fuck you, then?" I move my free hand to her back, pressing her to me, grinding my cock to her stomach. "Don't keep me waiting, pet, or I'll take you however I fucking please."

Killian growls, turned on from watching us. From the smell of blood and the gore around us. Just like me. And apparently, just like Amara.

"Kill him first." She moans while jerking her head to Christopher. "I'll wait naked for you two."

I twist my head to Killian and the wide-eyed, bleeding Christopher. He's seen some messed-up shit in his life. At least he thought he had. Until he met us. The realization fills me with an immense sense of pride for the people we are.

"Security will get antsy soon," Killian warns, though his hungry gaze means he doesn't give a shit about anyone barging in.

"Too bad." Amara winks at him. "I guess that means you'll have to kill him fast."

"I should, shouldn't I?" Killian crouches to grip Christopher by the hair, raising and bashing his head against the floor for the millionth time today.

Blood splashes onto Killian's shoes. I bet Christopher's brain has turned to mush.

I can't take my eyes off Killian. From the way he looks at Amara and how he changes before us the longer Christopher grunts in pain. Kill's expression darkens, reminding me of the sickness I recognize in myself.

The lust is there, sure. That's not all, though. The need to draw blood is there. Inflict pain. Play with his toys.

"Then again, fuck the shoulds." Killian reaches for a large, sharp shard from the broken vase on the floor, his lips hiking to the side. "We'll barrel the door. I'm owed this vengeance." He yanks Christopher's head so the pale-eyed man stares death right in the eye. "You threatened me. You threatened my stepson. You threatened Amara. That's three strikes, you miserable lowlife. You're done."

Fuck, I don’t want to get in his way. But another second of me not sinking my teeth into either him or Amara, and I’ll lose my fucking mind.

Since Killian’s busy, our beautiful lady it is.

She cries out the same moment Christopher does.

Only difference is that the former enjoys herself.

The latter is being stabbed by Killian.

My teeth are fixed into Amara’s shoulder over her O scar, my gaze and Amara’s never leaving Killian. As he lifts the shard, shoves it into Christopher’s temple, further and further until it comes out on the other end. Through his eye.

Christopher’s eyeball pokes out, his body convulsing. The hitman foams at the mouth, trembling uncontrollably in Killian’s hold. A delicious sucking sound wafts into my expectant ears when Killian pulls out the shard.

Amara clutches at my shoulders, her fingernails digging into my biceps. “Please, Carter. Let me see.”

I give her what she’s begging for, letting go of her shoulder and manhandling her until she has a good view of Killian. Her ass presses to my cock, my arms are wrapped around her middle.

“Do you like it, pet?” I say loud enough for Killian to hear. For me to realize that it’s real.

Our lady has turned out to be a blend of Killian, me, and of course herself. Beautifully sick, angelic, and perfect.

“Yes,” she whimpers, gripping my hand and bringing it to her pussy. She’s hot, her thighs clenching.

Killian acknowledges us by throwing us a devious glance. Then he finishes what he started, hoisting Christopher in the air and flipping his body so the asshole lies on his other side.

Emptiness glares back at Amara and me behind Christopher’s eye. Crimson, thick blood gushes from where Killian stabbed him. Amara moans, wriggling in my hold. Making my cock leak with precum.

“That what you want?” Impatience takes hold of me, and I haul the skirt of her dress up, finding her panties soaked. “Your pussy touched while Killian’s over there killing the man who dared threaten you?”

“Please.” She turns her head to me, her desperate lips seeking mine.

With my free hand, I push her pretty face back to Killian. I shove her panties to the side, brushing my thumb on her clit once, twice, before

squeezing mercilessly, causing her to jolt.

“And you thought she’d break up with us.” Killian smirks, watching us as he’s holding the shard in his hand like some goddamn medieval warrior.

“I had no idea I liked it, but I do. Now, I want more,” Amara confesses, her voice breathy.

Kinda hard to talk when I drag two fingers in and out of her cunt. When my thumb touches her the way she likes.

“You’ll get more, beautiful girl.” Killian obeys her command, lifting his hand to strike Christopher’s other temple.

The shard is sharp. Killian is murderous. Both work in his advantage, and Christopher’s skin bends to Kill’s will. Christopher’s blood splatters on every inch of his face, his hair falling on his forehead.

Amara’s orgasm pummels through her body, and she shudders in my grip.

They’re both perfect. So fucking perfect.

And once Christopher stops breathing, I have them and the room all for myself.

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CHAPTER FORTY-FIVE

Killian

Blood coats my hands. Soaks my shirt, my pants, my shoes.

The pungent smell of puke laces with copper and hormones.

I should be disgusted. I should call someone to clean this shit up.

I should worry.

Our staff must have put two and two together and have realized the three of us are together in some capacity or another. Easing people into our relationship isn't going to happen.

They'll talk.

But what did I just say a few minutes ago?

Fuck the shoulds.

Thinking Amara might be hurt was a quick and painful lesson in what's important in this life. I didn't care about appearances. I was willing to kill anyone who looked at us the wrong way. Anyone who said a single motherfucking bad word about our relationship.

More than anything, I needed to save her.

And now that she's safe, my resolve hasn't changed. I know Carter and I won't hesitate to take down anyone who threatens our small family.

Rip them to shreds.

"You think you're safe, beautiful girl?" I ask the boneless girl Carter has in his arms.

Adrenaline pummels through my veins. Drenches my blood with violence.

"Why wouldn't I be?" she whispers, betting her eyelashes at me.

Carter smiles behind her, enjoying the violence echoing in my voice.

“You did what you thought was right.” I rise to my full six-three, wiping my hands on my jacket. “And I get it. I really do. Problem is, you could’ve gotten yourself hurt. Killed, even.”

Amara cowers into Carter’s embrace at the underlying threat. He nuzzles her hair while slowly loosening his grip on our little prey.

My cock aches for release. My hands demand I cause damage.

Brain begging for chaos.

Carter tosses over to me one of the wipes he reserves for Cyclone. I tear the package open, cleaning my hands and the area around my mouth. The rest of Christopher’s blood stays on my face, drying as I prowl toward Amara and Carter.

“What are you doing?” Her chin quivers, and she raises her arms to shield herself.

“You’ve been bad.” I shrug off my jacket. My shirt too.

Carter follows my lead, backing off to remove his jacket and shirt. “Very, very bad, pet.”

“I—uh—I haven’t.” The way her voice trembles has me harder than ever.

The desire to taste every inch of both her and Carter is overwhelming.

My hand finds the side of his neck, locking on it, while my tongue runs across the length of his neck. His fingers close on my wrist, and he moans when I suck on his skin. Marking him. Claiming what’s mine.

In my periphery, I notice Amara’s backing off. I break away from Carter, turning my attention to the woman we’re about to hunt.

“You invited these assholes here.” I gesture to the dead bodies we’ve just stepped over.

Wide, brown eyes dart between Carter and me. “Technically, just one asshole.”

“You hear that?” Carter twists his head to me. His psycho grin stretches his lips, one of his black eyebrows quirks up. “She’s talking back.”

“Begging us to hurt her.”

“No, I’m not.” Amara takes another hesitant step back.

She’s glued to the wall, sliding across it toward the executive room’s bedroom. She doesn’t fear us. But the act she puts on makes it look like she does. Her fear—even if fake—rouses sinister needs in me.

Chase. Hunt. Feed.

“Yes.” Carter moves to my side, his shoulder pressing to mine. “You are.”

“No, no.” She presses her hands to the wall, sliding another step to the open door. “Please, go away. Don’t hurt me.”

“That’s not begonias.” My fists clench and unclench at my sides.

“No,” she mouths.

“Get her.” My order is quiet. Barely a whisper.

Carter doesn’t need it to be louder. We eradicate the short distance between us and her while she’s screaming her head off.

“No!” Her eyes widen, her shriek sounding so real.

Hell, maybe we do scare her.

What a beautiful emotion to evoke in someone. In *our* someone.

“You’re in trouble, pet.” Carter stalks toward her, slamming his hands on either side of her head. Caging her in.

At least we thought we did. Our terrified girl slips beneath Carter, then me, making a beeline for the bedroom.

“Go away!”

“Never.” My gait is slow and menacing. We’re right behind her.

“We’re taking you.” The amusement in his voice is palpable. “Then we’re using you. Punishing you.”

Her hand grips the handle of the bedroom’s door, her face pale. She’s about to close the door in our faces.

“Not happening, pet.” Carter’s hand shoves the door all the way back.

“Your tight holes better be ready for us.” I sidestep him, grabbing a fistful of Amara’s hair.

Goosebumps rake her skin when I graze my teeth along her slender neck. She shudders in my arms. Shuddering harder when Carter’s lips join me on the other side. He’s not as gentle as I am.

I know, because she starts screaming at his bite.

“I hope they’re not,” he adds, same as he always does, cupping her pussy from over her dress. “I hope we make it hurt.”

“You’ll be sore after we’re done with you.”

We prowl forward, giving Amara no other choice but to step back. She puts up a fight, and we push forward harder. Our legs are against hers, edging her backward until we’re stopped by the bed.

All it takes is the slightest shove to have Amara falling onto the bed. Her feet flail in the air for the second it takes her to recover. Our little prey doesn’t stay put, scrambling to get up. Desperate to flee.

She’ll never flee from us.

Never.

Her escape attempts are obliterated as soon as she starts moving. Carter shoves her right leg to the side, holding it there, while I push her dress up to her waist, revealing her soaked panties to us.

I'm about to ruin them some more.

"Don't." She hooks her fingers to the hem of the dress, trying to yank it down. Failing. "Please, don't."

Amara's plea goes right over our heads. She's our toy, and our toy has been naughty. She's no match to Carter's and my strength, and her body gives in to us. Carter holds her right thigh down, while I place my knee next to his, going for her panties.

"Help," she cries out as I tear the flimsy material in two.

No one's coming for her.

Once her panties are torn in half, I press my knee to her dripping hole, being a violent asshole about it.

"You'll be very sore, A. And still…" With her stuck beneath me, it's easy for Carter to take his knife out of his pants pocket and start his games. "You'll be begging for more. Tell me why that is, Amara?"

"In your dreams." Her large eyes fix on Carter's knife as he pins it to her collarbone. "I would never ask you animals for more."

"Wrong answer." He nicks her skin.

Just a little.

Just enough to make her bleed for us.

"Mmm." His hand is on the underside of her breast while he licks the blood off her. He tastes her skin, sucking the wounded area for more. "So good. Your fear is addictive, pet."

I pull him by the hair. "Don't be greedy."

"No, Killian, stop." It's cute the way she tries to ward us off. Cute and futile. "This is my blood. Mine."

Something about her resistance and today's events push me further over the edge. Closer to insanity than I'd like to admit. But fuck if I don't like it.

My lips curve up, and I feel as though my smile isn't mine.

It's Carter's. A crazy grin that stretches my lips. I watch Amara's face twist with love and fear. Carter's tongue as he swipes it across his bottom lip.

I'm being transformed into a savage.

A loving, obsessed savage.

“Sweetheart, nothing is *yours* anymore.” My hold on Carter’s hair tightens and he moans. “From now on, everything is *ours*. And we’re here to collect. We share hearts, blood, and everything in between. Everything.”

I let her scream and wiggle as I yank on Carter’s head and bring his mouth to mine. His tongue flicks on my tongue, offering me Amara’s blood. Offering me his mouth. His tongue. His soul.

Choosing which one of them tastes better is impossible. Good fucking thing I don’t have to choose.

Both of them are mine for the rest of our lives.

“Enough.” I tear him from me when my need to conquer bleeds from my every pore. Uncontrolled and unhinged, I grab Amara’s thigh, forcing her pussy to my knee. She drips on me as I order Carter, “Take me out.”

His lips are parted, swollen, red. His breaths are labored.

“My pleasure.” He’s feral, his voice less human and more of a growl.

“Help,” Amara whimpers as Carter moves to the side, biting down on his knife.

The hunter in me takes the back seat if only for a second to gauge for any signs of distress on her beautiful face. Carter works my belt, and her brown orbs sparkle. Deviant little thing.

“Fuck.” Carter’s hand on my cock has my attention snapping back to him.

More feeble cries burst from Amara at the sight of my throbbing cock. Cries that are actually moans.

“See this?” I thrust my knee to her pussy, reveling in her pained scream. In how Carter’s hand strokes me hard. “Every inch of me will be inside you.”

“Where?” She leans on her forearms, another attempt to run away. It gets her nowhere.

Carter drops the knife to the bed, his palm splaying out on her wounded flesh. “Bad girls don’t get to have answers.”

“They don’t.” A drop of precum leaks from my cock. “They just take it.”

“Stay there, pet.” Carter straightens to start unbuckling his belt.

“Okay,” she breathes.

She’s lying.

I love that. Her fight. Her crazy. She’s beautiful.

Carter’s hand fucks my cock slower so he can push down his zipper with one hand. Amara stares at us with a heated gaze. Both of us hover over her

on our knees. Cocks out. Our violence barely contained.

"Want to get her naked?" I jerk my chin to where Carter's pocket knife dropped. "Get her ready for us?"

Carter nods, and I move to the side, taking off my shoes and pants. Getting harder by the second as I watch him flip Amara on her stomach.

She clutches the front of the bed, mumbling '*no*.' Her ass wiggles as she tries to flee.

Adorable.

"You just don't understand, do you?" While I grab Amara's foot, Carter silently slices through her dress, bottom to top. "You scared the living fuck out of us. It's only fair you get a taste of it in return."

She squeals. Carter holds her by one ass cheek, his palm huge on her round, delectable ass. He keeps her in place for me, lets me take his spot. Groans loudly when I slap Amara's tight hole with my cock, then spit on it.

"I didn't mean to scare you." Her brown eyes find mine over her shoulder.

We know she didn't. Both Carter and I heard her loud and clear earlier. We didn't need this little stunt to respect or adore her more than we had, either. But I can't deny the scene that we walked into was one of the hottest things I'd ever witnessed.

As does the idea of making her hurt.

"Should've thought about that before." I line the tip of my cock to her tight hole, rubbing the wetness into the rim while pushing her head back to the bed.

Hiding from her what Carter and I have planned.

"You really should've." Carter spits on Cyclone's handle while I tease her asshole, then aligns the end of the black handle over the spot where I tease her. "Too bad we can't erase the past. You're going to lie here and take your punishment. If you're a good girl, we'll even make you come."

I pull back, and he quickly places the handle on Amara's spit-soaked asshole. She barely manages to realize we've swapped places when he pushes it inside her.

"Fuck." She clenches her ass, legs trembling. "Fuck, Carter, not with Cyclone."

"Yes, with Cyclone." He sinks another inch inside, then out. In and out.

Amara's body falls to the bed, her stomach almost hitting the mattress. Carter stops and I'm quick to wrap an arm around her middle, thrusting her

back up.

Now that her face isn't mashed into the bed, she tucks her hair away from her sweat-stricken face, glowering at us. "I hate you."

"Nah, you don't hate us." Carter, unbothered by Amara's words, continues slipping his killing tool in and out of her.

Some of the tension releases from her, and slowly, she opens up for us. Then the moans come. Such beautiful moans.

I shouldn't be this turned on from watching my stepson fuck our girlfriend's ass with a foreign object.

I am. Every sick part of me is.

"Look at her taking it." I throw at him. "If you keep that up, I'm going to get real fucking jealous."

I pretend to ignore her. Truth is, I don't miss anything about Amara. Especially not the blush exploding on her cheeks.

"Then again." I gather saliva in my mouth, spitting on her asshole when Cyclone's out. "Maybe I do want you to come from this. Carter?"

"You know I do." His biceps flex and I can tell it takes every ounce of him not to act on his urges and fuck her harder. "She'll be screaming for my knife."

His cock thickens too. I reach for him, flicking my thumb on his piercing, gathering his precum on my thumb, and suck on it.

"I already told you I would never." Her angry denial reaches straight to my balls. "Twisted fucks."

"Amara, Amara, Amara." I use my free hand to slap her ass. "You should be grateful for the plastic fucking your ass right now. We could've been less merciful. I could've gone in dry, split you in half."

"You wouldn't have."

"Maybe we should." I fist Carter's cock again, and he thrusts into my touch. "Make you scream."

"Oh, pet." Carter removes the knife carefully and loses it before removing his shoes, socks, pants, and briefs. "I'm gonna have so much fun fucking you into submission."

A low whimper is all we get.

I slap her ass. "You're here?"

"Ow. Yes."

Carter crawls up the bed, sitting against the headboard. I shove Amara higher up, closer to him.

“Good girl.”

Carter wastes no time fisting her hair and forcing his cock between her lips.

“Fuck, I needed that.” His head falls back, his groan reverberating through me.

“Eyes open,” I bark. “I want you to look at me when I’m balls deep in her ass.”

He does. Gray eyes slide from Amara’s bobbing head to my face. He grunts when they reach my erect cock, the same time he pushes Amara’s head deeper.

I don’t tease either of them. Can’t help myself when I shove through the tight tissues of Amara’s pucker. When she screams, Carter pulls her head up for air. I don’t have to ask why. He’s letting me enjoy her tortured sounds, getting off on them with me.

“You want more?” he asks her while I pound into her, while my fingers bury into her flesh.

“No,” she chokes out, barely heard over my grunts.

“Kinda sounds like a yes to me.” Carter smirks, lowering her to his dick, impaling her mouth.

Together, we create a symphony. Violent and synchronized. Rough and loving.

“Pet.” Softness slithers into Carter’s voice. Just a fraction. He lifts her head, twists her carefully back to me. “Watch him take your ass.”

A line of saliva stretches from her mouth to Carter’s cock until she’s fully looking at me. The corners of her eyes are wet, her nostrils flaring.

I’m so in love.

“Like what you see?” He uses the thumb of his free hand to wipe her saliva and suck it into his mouth.

Her act drops altogether the way we fuck and worship her. It’s evident in her expression. It’s made even more evident when she says, “Yes. Fucking love it.”

“Too bad.” Carter smirks, sadistic as fuck. “Because now you’re gonna have a view of my cock again.”

She sucks in a breath of air. He grants her a short second, then uses her mouth for his pleasure. Carter pumps his hips up to meet her, and I’m set on fire. On the goddamn edge.

“Come for us, beautiful girl.” My fingers find her clit, touching her the way she likes.

I’m done being an asshole. I’m theirs.

“It’s your turn, pet.” Carter grits out the words, his orgasm about to consume him. “Clench on us. Scream. Thrash. Squeeze us dry.”

Her responsive body reacts to our encouragement. She freezes one moment, letting go the next. Her body gives in, her orgasm becoming a living thing. Taking over her. Over us. Over the entire universe.

Carter comes next with her head pinned to his pubic bone. The two of them are what sets me off, and I rock into Amara hard, emptying myself into her ass.

I pull out of Amara at the same moment Carter helps her off his cock. Through the blood, puke, and dead bodies, we carry her to the bath.

We wash her. We love her. We love each other.

Then we tell her what a good girl she is. How happy we are that she’s alive.

And go out there to face the world.

• • • • • • • • •

“So it’s a thing. You’re together.” Luna’s gaze darts from Amara to Carter to me. “As in the three of you? Everyone with everyone?”

“Yes.” I nod.

The five of us, Snake included, are in the main office. We left room 5009 for our housekeeping staff and our movers, Lance and Shawn. The moment we stepped out of there is the moment we left the last of our secrets behind. We’re done hiding.

When the truth finally came out today, a surge of air entered my lungs. Even though the confession was made in front of that lowlife, Christopher, I *felt* it.

The relief. That flicker of happiness.

I’m proud of my relationship with my stepson and Amara. For the short few weeks we’ve been together, they’ve been helping me unravel. To admit to the one thing that’s been missing in my life. The one I couldn’t ask for until it was thrusted into my lap.

Them.

For them—these two humans my heart is forever connected to—I'd put myself out there. I'd risk being scorned or accused. With open motherfucking arms.

And fists.

And Carter's Cyclone.

No one would spew made-up shit about us and get to live.

Our hotel will survive.

So will we.

Loving the people you love and having them love you back can never be wrong.

"Do you mind me asking how this happened?" Luna's smile is warm.

We told her and Snake the gist of it. She doesn't have to stay here. She can go back and enjoy her new husband. She doesn't, though. Can't help her curiosity.

I understand.

Still, it's none of her business.

Carter, sitting on the leather chair beside me with Amara in his lap, says what the three of us are thinking, "We walked into it as consenting adults. That's all you or anyone else needs to know."

Amara, floaty and beautiful, massages his wet hair. Hers is damp as well, draping across her shoulders, darkening the black hotel uniform shirt she's wearing.

My hand is on her knee, and Carter covers it, connecting the three of us.

"Okay." Luna holds up her tablet, preparing to type. "Anything else you want me to forward to our members?"

"No." On the outside, I'm all business. On the inside, I'm dying to get home. "They should figure out the *we won't tolerate any crap from anyone* part on their own."

"We'll be ready, boss, in case anyone doesn't get the message." Snake cracks his tattooed fingers, a mean-looking smile curving his lips. "Our team won't fail you again, I promise you."

Carter's thumb rubs slow circles onto Amara's thigh, grazing my hand too. He doesn't add how he'd love nothing more than to put some people in their place. Everyone in the room is aware of it without him needing to say a word.

Snake and Luna say their goodbyes, and we're left alone. Just the three of us.

“So, that’s it?” Amara glances between Carter and me. “We’re together? Forever?”

Her enthusiasm never fails to warm my heart. She’s more endearing than humanly possible. Hungry for love just as she’s eager to spread it.

“Would you like it to be?” I grab her feet, placing them in my lap.

My question is a response to her statement, but it’s directed to Carter as well.

“Yes.” Carter kisses her temple and squeezes my hand.

“A million yesses.” Amara puts her hand on top of ours. “A million and one.”

“Good. Because we were never going to let you go.”

“Never.” Carter picks her up, and I’m right behind him as he walks for the door. “Now, let’s go home.”

“Home.” She smiles.

The smile I return to her is the last thing she sees before her eyes grow heavy, her exhaustion carrying her into what I hope is a soundless sleep.

Good thing too. She’s going to need it. Both Carter and her.

For the rest of our lives, each and every one of my waking moments will be dedicated to these two.

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EPILOGUE

Amara

Some people have to die.

Not as the natural order of things.

Not because the Earth needs to be less populated.

Some people just have to die because they broke Voltage rules.

And guess what? That's totally okay with me.

It always has been.

Despite what Carter thought, I loved listening to his and Killian's stories. They're both such ass-kicking alphas, maintaining the peace in the animal kingdom like they do.

I love it tenfold when they tell me about the morons who disrespect us and our relationship, and what they do to them.

That's a rare occurrence, though. After all, the criminals of New York and its surroundings aren't stupid.

Most of them aren't.

Most of them didn't even care that we're together, and very few pulled out of their memberships. No one lamented them leaving. Better off this way.

But those who stayed and were still hateful jerks got punished.

In our office.

They let me watch for a while. That was until their super sperm knocked me the fuck up.

"I'm not sure being around blood and people screaming will be good for the twins," Killian said at one dinner when I asked to join. "Even in the

womb.”

“Please, I just want to see.” I gave him my biggest puppy eyes, batting my eyelashes at him.

His stern expression told me he wasn’t falling for that.

Neither had Carter. He dropped a chunk of sticky rice in his mouth, then pointed the chopsticks at me. “They hear everything in the womb, you know.”

We couldn’t do a DNA test to determine who the father was, since they weren’t reliable for twins. But during the entire length of the pregnancy, it hadn’t mattered to either of the men.

We were family, the three of us. We’d test them later—despite Carter’s aversion to it—though it wouldn’t change a thing. These men would be their fathers and I’d be their mother, end of story.

The two men who stroked my belly every chance they got. Who’d been researching, and reading, and took me to the best doctor in New York. Who’d made the perfect nursery for our future babies in Carter’s old room.

They made me so happy, I thought I’d die. These men were nothing like my parents. They loved the babies from the moment my pregnancy test showed we were expecting, and they loved them hard.

This new side of them was so endearing.

Besides the no-watching-violence bit. That pissed me off.

“Baby, I swear.” Carter grasped my hand while Killian wiped a silly tear from my cheek. Freaking hormones. “The moment these munchkins pop out of you, you can join us whenever you want.”

I frowned, but what could I say? He had a point.

I’d been patient for the nine months I carried our babies. And now they’re out.

Our babies. Ours. Literally, too. Skyla, our girl turned out to be Carter’s, and Ares, our boy, is biologically Killian’s.

Our black-haired kid and the blond one.

Who currently sleep at Luna and Julien’s apartment until their parents’ date night is over.

“See, I heard you were talking shit about our woman.” Carter twirls Cyclone in his hand.

Every time the blade swings, it nearly cuts through Dorothy’s green eye. The blond drug dealer flinches, although that’s the most she can do. Being tied to a chair kind of limits her movements.

“I only said—”

Carter spins Cyclone one last time. Then he sinks it into Dorothy’s shoulder.

Her scream gets me all warm and fuzzy inside. I shrug off my restricting black suit jacket—I’ve opted out of my colorful clothes to match outfits with my partners today—and toss it on the desk behind me.

The desk of our office.

Killian—who already removed his jacket—rolls up his sleeves. Each inch reveals more of his sexy forearms, more of his enchanting tattoos. To the old and the new ones he added.

Amara and Carter are etched on his right wrist. Skyla and Ares on the left.

He grabs the woman’s head, yanking it back without an ounce of mercy.

She screams again. I giggle.

“There’s no *only*, Dorothy.” He’s talking to her, but he’s looking at me. “You broke rule number three”—our latest and bestest —“which is—no one calls Amara a gold-digging whore and lives to see another day.”

“No one.” Carter’s grin widens as he drags the knife from her shoulder down her arm.

Blood oozes out of the gash, painting her skin red.

“Can I help?”

Carter’s gray eyes rise to meet mine. Both men look at me curiously.

“Help with what, beautiful girl?”

I bat my eyelashes innocently. “Can I kill her?”

Their knowing smiles are all the answers I need.

It’s not like I crave murdering people left and right. I’m actually fond of Voltage’s members and staff. They seem genuinely nice. Plus, they visit my shop and buy my flowers. Lots of them. Carnations is thriving with two new employees and a second floor added for Opal to do our flower arrangements without a soul bothering her.

When people wrong us, though, I’m insatiable. I become a little vampire, thirsty for blood like my babies are for my milk.

“There you go, pet.” Carter offers me his knife.

Dorothy’s screams are now annoying, pathetic sobs.

“You should’ve thought about that before you decided to be a bitch.” I shake my head at him, whipping off my belt. “I would suggest you choose your words wisely next time.”

I meander toward the back of the chair. Carter grabs my chin, crushing his lips to mine in a quick, forceful kiss.

He lets me go, and as I make it behind Dorothy, Killian releases her hair to press a panty-melting kiss to my mouth too. His firm palm cups my cheek, his teeth spearing into my bottom lip.

There's no hiding the big-ass smile on my face.

Their love gives me life.

And it makes taking Dorothy's that much more entertaining.

"Except there won't be a next time." I loop the black leather belt around her neck. "Nice knowing ya."

Her little strangled choking sounds are our soundtrack for the next ten minutes or so. I allow her to breathe a couple of times, torturing her by letting her believe I'm having second thoughts about killing her.

I don't.

"A, that's enough playing with your food." Carter places a hand on my shoulder. His tone isn't reproachful. He's amused.

"You're one to talk." Killian's voice is equally entertained.

"I was right," Dorothy mumbles from beneath me. "You three really are __"

My belt almost slices through Dorothy's throat with the effort I'm putting into choking her.

Her eyes bulge and veins explode in them. Spit flies from her mouth and lands on her white blouse. Her fingers clutch helplessly against the belt.

"You just had to go and ruin all the fun for me." I lean over her, filling her view. "Goodbye, asshole."

A minute later, her head lulls to the side, her eyelids closing.

"Lance, we're done," Carter barks to the phone on my side while he rubs my forearm.

Killian does the same on my left arm. "You did so well, beautiful girl."

His praise washes over me, his lips landing on my neck. I release my grip on my belt, tilting my head back for Carter to join us. He does, ending his phone call, sliding his hand to my breast and his lips to my neck as well.

"I love you," Carter grunts, his words meant for our ears.

My skin tingles when their lips trace higher to my jaw, my chin, my lips.

"I love you," Killian murmurs against our mouths. The words come easier for him today than they had almost a year ago, but it's cute how he still fights them sometimes.

“And I love you.” I dart my tongue out, tasting the mint on Killian’s lips and the bloodthirst on Carter’s.

This world may not be perfect. My history may be riddled with sadness and disappointments.

But this moment is right. Our family is right.

And our future is a motherfucking bright one, too.

Because it’s no one else’s but ours.

The end.

Keep reading for a sneak peek of Breaking the Girl, my dark best friend's dad romance that's coming this August 8

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Breaking the Girl - Prologue

Marcus

Four years ago

What I'm doing—have been doing for the past year now—is wrong. So wrong.

No matter how I twist and turn it in my head, it's still wrong.

Stalking my only daughter's best friend—wanting her the way I do—isn't right.

I'm a thirty-seven-year-old psychiatrist. She just turned eighteen a few months ago.

She's Rylan's best friend.

I should know better. Stop making excuses for myself.

There's no justification for what I'm doing.

Doesn't matter that Leighton is my little voyeur. That she sneaks up to my room when she thinks I'm sleeping or watching TV.

I'm still every bit of an immoral, twisted man.

What the fuck am I doing, taking advantage of her friendship with Rylan the way I do?

Watching over her, her best friend, and their guy friend in the pool of my backyard from my window on the second floor shouldn't be wrong.

Except it is. Because I only have eyes for Leighton Irvine.

What’s worse is, spying on her from afar is nothing. Nothing compared to what I’ve done to Leighton over the past few months since her eighteenth birthday.

Other than touch her, I do vile, deplorable things to her while she sleeps. In my head.

I touch myself while she watches. Pretending I have no idea she’s there.

But it’s under control. I won’t go to her. Won’t flirt or ask her out.

Her age doesn’t matter.

Rylan matters. In many more ways than one.

Oh, fuck, who am I fooling? No one.

The beast in me wants Leighton. Craves her.

It’s only a matter of time until I snap. It doesn’t help that she’s been sleeping over in Rylan’s room more during their senior year.

I’m so close to snapping.

I can’t. I have to contain the situation. My carnal desires and the way I want to pull at Leighton’s pink hair until she cries my name have no place here.

Good thing I managed to convince the girls to attend a college in Texas. Far, far from my home in Santa Barbara.

Leighton shouldn’t be here in California.

Being around me isn’t safe for her.

Just a few more months. A few more months and you’ll be safe.

I can control myself. I have to control myself.

I watch.

Just. Watch.

Between the shadows of the second floor of my home, I get an unobstructed view of Leighton sitting beside the pool. Her beautiful curvy body is on display as she lies on one of the lounge chairs in her bikini.

I should be in bed, sleeping.

Should be writing my next lecture on hypnotherapy for a convention I’ve been invited to next month.

Anything but this.

Except watching Leighton is a compulsion I can’t resist.

She’s sweet, so sweet, as she laughs there with my daughter. Milo and Rylan are inside the warm pool, but Leighton won’t get in with them. She never does. I’ve known so for years.

And yet she still wears a bikini to hang around them. Has done so every day during the summer she's spent here.

The skimpy white material barely covers her skin. Her plump lips stretch in the most beautiful smile I've ever seen.

The honorable, sane side of me has a simple explanation for this. For why she's always here and not sleeping at her parents'. Why she's wearing a bikini without getting into the water until the sun's no longer up in the sky.

It's Rylan. Of course it's for her, for my daughter. Leighton's best friend loves to swim, so she's blending in by keeping her bikini on.

Of course.

Of. Course.

But the sick and twisted part of me insists otherwise. The deviant side of me has another truth in mind.

Leighton isn't here just for Rylan. She hasn't kept her bikini on to blend in, or for any other reason other than…

Me.

Leighton's here donning a bikini at night for me. For my benefit.

Fuck, the thought alone gets me harder than before. My cock strains against my black cotton pants. Hand clenching and unclenching at my side, I'm mad. I'm mad it's not closing around Leighton's throat. Around my throbbing dick.

I should walk away from this. Turn away. Go to my goddamn bed and sleep. But fuck me, I'm unable to tear myself from this. Unable to subdue this depravity within me.

I'm here, following her every move, eyeing her as she stands up after Rylan splashed water at her. She's playful like that, my daughter. But that playfulness has Leighton soaked and needing a change of clothes.

Which is why she turns to leave the poolside.

Being a single dad, I'm protective as fuck over Rylan. I wouldn't have allowed my daughter to stay with a boy in the pool by herself. A boy she obviously likes.

Blond, tall, and muscular man-boys have no business wandering around my daughter in the pool, after dark. Most of them would've tried sleeping with her at this point. After all, he has been coming over for months.

Not Milo.

This isn't my daughter he's after. She's never been the one whose ass he's been ogling.

He’s drawn to the same young woman I am.

The woman who’s *mine*.

Leighton.

Five feet and two inches of soft curves, large breasts, and sexy hips she hides with a towel. A mane of metallic rose-colored hair that she brushes behind her back.

Her eyes are too far for me to see clearly, but I don’t need to be down there to know what they’re like. The brightest blues I’ve ever seen. Some days, I convince myself it’s the dark ring around her irises that makes her this special. On others, when I’m honest with myself, I recognize my fascination with her eyes for what it truly is.

Attraction.

Desire.

An incurable obsession.

A few months before her eighteenth birthday, that’s when it started. I saw Leighton in a brand-new light and couldn’t look away ever since. She’s been on my mind nonstop. There’s no one out there for me but her. I’m sure of it.

I haven’t crossed any boundaries up until four months ago. Those boundaries have been getting blurry, though. I want her all to myself. All the time.

So much so that I’m starting to make plans for our future.

A future we can never have.

No one can ever know about my feelings for her.

The darkness in me is nobody’s business but mine.

But so is the girl I’m drawn to.

Mine to love. Mine to fantasize over. Mine to protect.

Mine.

If Rylan finds out, she’ll forgive me. She always does.

She won’t ever forgive *her*.

I don’t need to be a psychiatrist to understand that Rylan’s territorial behavior around me has a lot to do with her mother dying at childbirth. Rylan is a sweet, wounded bird. She needs her father to be there for her and only her. Nothing romantic. She loves me. And I should love no one except her.

I got the message loud and clear years ago.

I allowed her to be possessive of me. Ignored the things her strong feelings made her do.

Leighton's movement interrupts my grim thoughts. She starts treading to the sliding door that'll lead her into the house. Her feet leave a wet trail.

My black gaze doesn't leave her. I'm eating up every move she makes. How she raises her delicate arm to open the sliding door. So elegant as she steps inside the house and disappears from view.

This is my cue.

I slip into my other hiding spot, my room at the end of the hallway. Leave my door ajar, switching off the lights. Like I've been doing almost every night she's been sleeping here over the past few months.

To stalk her.

To invite her without a single word to watch me. She has no idea that I'm onto her. That I hear and see her touching herself when Rylan's sleeping or when my daughter sneaks out to one of her hacking competitions.

Leighton is a dirty little girl with a dirty little secret. She's depraved, and I'm her enabler.

Wearing all black to blend with the darkness of my room, I prey on her. Listen to her footsteps as she ascends the stairs.

Her pink hair announces her arrival. On wet feet, she pads into Rylan's bedroom, then comes back out again.

As expected, Leighton has a change of clothes. She's gripping her skimpy night shorts and white T-shirt in one hand on her way to the bathroom.

Naked.

She holds the knot in the front of her towel, but underneath that, she's naked.

Fuck.

My tongue swipes across the top row of my teeth.

Her breasts, squeezed by the tight knot in the towel, bounce as she crosses the hallway. When she passes my room, I get the view of her round ass as it sways from side to side.

I want to cup those cheeks with both hands. Bruise them as I pummel into her from behind. Violate her in ways no other man ever has.

I don't. I won't. I fist my hard cock in my hand. Pull at my short, thick black hair, so the pain will silence my groan of pleasure.

Texas. She'll be in Texas soon.

The reminder hurts me to my core. In two days, forty-fucking-eight hours, she'll be gone until winter break.

I'll miss my daughter. That's a given. But I don't need my daughter more than I need my next breath. I definitely don't obsess over Rylan like I do over Leighton.

I stroke my cock, pressing an ear to the wall as I do. Listening to the water running and imagining her nipples perking under the stream is torture.

Imagining the months I won't have her here is worse.

I'm an asshole for pushing away from the wall. A complete idiot for grabbing a handful of clean towels from my closet, pulling open the door and stalking over to the bathroom.

Not like I have a choice. I need her, the only woman to get my dick this hard. The only one to set my lungs on fire. The only one to make my heart stammer.

Silence takes over the hallway when she shuts down the water. She's probably reaching for a towel to dry herself off. Droplets of water trickle along her soft curves.

Seconds pass when the scent of daisies and summer filters into the hallway. Leighton's body mist. I know it's hers. I sniff the towels she throws into the laundry.

Outside, Rylan's still laughing with Milo in the pool. There's no danger of any of them coming up here in the next hour or so.

What about my moral compass, though? My ethics? What do I do with the voice telling me I should have Leighton's consent before I enter the bathroom?

Easy. I shut the motherfucker up. My subconscious is a sick, depraved creature. It crushes everything I believe in. Makes excuses for my behavior.

Leighton is eighteen. An adult.

She'll be gone soon. I have to have this one last taste. Have my fill until Thanksgiving break when I fly down to visit them. There's no harm in taking a small bite.

Something to live off on for the next few months.

Clank.

It's her, placing her body mist bottle on the vanity.

Two days. Then she'll pack the bottle with her and be far, far away from my reach.

She'll forget any of this ever happened.

No. Nothing can happen. I'll play what I'm about to do as an accident. That's it. Pretend I didn't hear her there. Go in and walk right the fuck out.

That's how she'll see it.

Armed with my sick sense of righteousness, I charge forward. The doorknob spins as I turn it to the right. I step inside the bathroom as if I haven't just listened in on Leighton showering.

There she is.

No towel. No clothes on. Not even a bra.

Naked.

Time freezes. Fuck, my fucking life freezes as I look her over.

The towel she must've held drops to the floor, pooling at her feet. She doesn't move a muscle to pick it back up, leaving her beautiful body on display.

Pink, suckable nipples the color of her lips. Pretty shaved pussy.

If I could, I'd shove my fingers inside her cunt. Just to feel her.

I can't. Me being here is supposed to be an accident. Nothing more.

Watching her naked is better than any filthy fantasy I've ever had. It's immeasurably better than any glimpse of her with her bikini on.

But then I lift my gaze to her face, and I lose my goddamn breath.

Her full lips gape in an O shape. Her blue eyes are huge. It's as if she doesn't blink.

It doesn't take me any time at all to realize it's not her body I'm after. It's her. The essence of her. How beautifully still she is.

A doll. My doll.

While I specialize in therapeutic hypnosis, I've never had this reaction to any of my patients. Plenty of them have laid on my couch in a trance. Not once have I gotten off on how still they were. Haven't had a single thought cross my mind about using their bodies for my twisted pleasure.

This girl, though, Jesus.

I almost reach out to brush Leighton's long, dripping pink hair behind her shoulder. Almost ask her if we can play a game.

Would it really be so bad?

Rylan's downstairs. She'll tell her what you did. As she should.

"I'm sorry." I cough, clearing any hint of my desire for her from my voice. "Didn't mean to barge in on you. I came in here to put in fresh towels, and it was quiet so I didn't knock. I apologize."

I’m not sorry. My actions show just how not sorry I am. Because despite my verbal apology, I don’t turn back to leave.

“Dr. Kingston,” Leighton whispers, her lips barely moving. “I-I should be sorry, for making this awkward for you. I should’ve locked the door. I thought you were sleeping.”

“No, you…” My heart wants to say, *You have nothing to apologize for. I’ve been craving this for months*. My responsible, single-dad brain knows better. “It’s Marcus, Leighton, remember?”

She bobs her head once. A drop of water cascades slowly down her temple, then her cheek. The elegant curve of her neck.

The watch on my left hand ticks. Seconds go by, and she still hasn’t bent to gather the towel to hide herself. Somehow, without realizing it, she’s tuning into my needs.

Or she might just be frozen with panic.

It startles me to realize that I don’t care if she is.

Instead of leaving like I should, I put the stack of clean towels on the vanity and grab the first one. “Let me cover you.”

She doesn’t say a word as I wrap the plush fabric around her shoulders. Doesn’t grimace or flinch as my knuckles graze her collarbone. She feels so soft, so fragile. It’s as if her skin is made of porcelain.

“There you go.” My face is dangerously close to hers. Her nose mere inches from mine. We’re breathing the same air.

I’m starving for more.

“I’m sorry,” she whispers again.

“Shh.” I grab both ends of the towel with one hand, then press a finger to her lips. “It’s all right. This will be a reminder to be careful in college. Keep your guard up around the other boys.”

Her breath hitches. Her cheeks redden.

I’ve gone too far. Traveled into the territory of inappropriate.

I have to fix it. Have to make her believe this is an innocent encounter.

I can’t have her tell Rylan this happened.

The consequences could be fatal.

“Keep an eye on Rylan.” I grip Leighton’s wrist, tugging her hand to replace mine on the towel. “Can you promise to do that for me?”

“Yes.” Her nod is more fervent this time, as if I’ve woken her from a trance. “I promise, I’ll always have her back.”

I take a step back toward the door. Then another.

I could wish her *goodnight*. I could thank her.

I don't.

"Good girl," I say, leaving and closing the door behind me.

My room feels a million miles away. It takes me an eternity to get there. To shut the door. To shove my hand into my boxers and pull my cock out.

Burning, pulsing desire pummels through me. I slam my hand to the wall, fucking my hand. I imagine each one of my strokes is me rutting into Leighton's pussy.

She'd clench around me. She'd hurt when I'd become this violent version of myself that comes out when I think of her.

I'd abuse her while she'd lie on my bed, unmoving yet receptive to everything I'd do to her. She'd need it. Crave it. I'd see the desire in her eyes, and give her anything she wants.

I'd give Leighton the world while bruising her black and blue.

Precum leaks from the crown of my dick. I'm panting, suffocating my grunts.

I need her.

I…

Fucking…

Need.

I finish myself off, my orgasm spurting on my hand and T-shirt.

Blood fills my mouth from biting down my lip. It tastes that much sweeter when I imagine it's Leighton's.

Once my pulse settles, I go to my bathroom, wiping myself clean. I stare at my reflection in the mirror, aware of what I'll find in my dark eyes.

Regret.

This is wrong. Following up on this depraved need will end badly for Leighton.

Just two more days to keep my dick in my pants and my mouth shut.

Two more days and the temptation will be gone.

Two more days, and she's safe.

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Breaking the Girl - CHAPTER ONE

Leighton

Four years later - Present day

Click.

A key turns in the lock of the front door.

Marcus—err, Rylan's *dad*—is back home.

The door handle squeaks ever-so-lightly when he presses it down.

I hold very still on the couch next to my best friend. I probably look uncomfortable as hell. Frozen. No muscle moves as I stare straight ahead.

It's as if I've never been in their living room before.

Except I have. Throughout most of my life, I've been Rylan's friend. Best. Meaning I've spent many days and nights here. I should be used to Marcus's presence.

I had been used to him. Until puberty hit many, many years ago. Ever since, butterflies and excitement freeze me in place whenever he walks into a room. Those first seconds are always the hardest.

Moreover, since I've been sneaking to peek at him while he's in bed, which started sometime after my seventeenth birthday. Since I know what he looks like naked. Since I do the things I do while he thinks there's no one around.

My voyeuristic trips have gotten progressively worse over the past two months since we returned home from college. I've been sleeping over at the

Kingstons' for the last three years now, ever since my dad got a new job and my parents moved to New York.

I tell myself it's okay. Remind myself our sleepovers here will be over next month when Ry and I move to the other side of the country. New York.

Technically, we should've left for Brooklyn by now. Should've settled into our new apartment together. The lease term starts this week.

I don't care about money when I get to stay here for another month.

Soon enough, real life will begin. I'll work long hours as an intern in a construction engineering company. Ry will hit the ground running as a quant analyst.

We'll have our new jobs, new friends. Parties to attend, hidden bars to uncover. We'll explore the good and bad and everything that has to do with adulting. Life will be perfect.

And though I wanted to be away from Marcus—away from the man I'll always want and could never have—I have to. For my sanity. For the sake of my friendship with Rylan.

I'll never tell her or anyone how hard I'm crushing on her father.

She hates being far from him as much as I do. Hated going to Texas for four years for this exact reason, except her dad insisted and she lives to please him.

This time around, Marcus didn't push us in that direction. It was Milo, Rylan's unrequited love subject. When he announced he'd go to med school in New York, she basically had no other choice but to join us there.

Reluctantly.

I get it. In a different way, but I do.

No more pool water cascading down Marcus's rippled abs. No more inhaling his cologne. No more sneaking glances at his angular jaw and wishing I could brush the pads of my fingers along his stubble.

No more sliding a hand down my panties in his doorway and—

Quiet, brain!

One footfall. A second one. The door closes.

"Hello," Dr. Marcus Kingston greets.

My heart skips a beat or two. Probably a thousand. His voice. Gah.

I'm trying to be less awkward, so I let my eyes flick to him. My breath catches in my throat. Dressed in a pair of dark-blue slacks and matching suit jacket, a white button-down shirt, he's a god.

His clothes accentuate every inch of his toned six-three frame. His tall and confident stance exudes silent, mesmerizing confidence.

Marcus's thick black hair doesn't betray his forty-one years on this planet. Nor does his wrinkle-free face. Even his short scruff is black.

And his black, intelligent, and interesting eyes. Sigh. They tell stories. It's obvious he's wise beyond his years. Even though I've been around here for as long as I can remember, I can tell things have happened to him. Things I'm not privy to.

The stories he must have. How interesting and wonderful and challenging they ought to be.

Too bad I'll never get to hear any of it.

Just as fast, I avert my gaze from him and to Rylan. Rylan's safe.

"Dad." She waves to him from the couch next to me. Her blue eyes sparkle, the afternoon sun casting golden shades onto her black hair. "You're home early."

"I am."

"Something wrong?" Rylan tilts her head, her expression darkening. "Are you going somewhere later?"

The steps of his dress shoes as he walks on the hardwood floors echo in the expansive living room area. Slow and calculated, unlike the erratic beats of my heart.

"No, Ry." It's not like him to ignore me. But Rylan does seem worried, so I understand. "My last patient for the day canceled his session."

"Oh, okay." A grin replaces her scowl. "Cool."

Marcus stops by Rylan's side of the couch, his large hand muffling her hair.

The gesture is sweet, but it also makes my stomach plummet to the floor. He treats her like a kid when she's actually twenty-two. Does he think I'm one as well?

He didn't seem to consider me as one four years ago, I think.

Ever since the incident in the bathroom, I've been praying for a repeat. For him to call me one day and ask me to go on a date or something. He would've told me I didn't imagine the explosive energy between us that day. I'd swoon.

Nothing like that has ever happened. Not even close.

Cold and distant with a rare smile every once in a really long while. That's how I'd describe his behavior toward me ever since.

Yeah, he definitely forgot about the most important moment of my life.

I'm a kid.

Except I'm not.

And I haven't forgotten a single moment of our encounter.

The feel of his finger on my lips won't go away. The darkening of his gaze haunts me wherever I go. His knuckles on my skin—

"Leighton." His deep voice calls my name. "I haven't said hello properly. I apologize. How are you?"

I'm still deep in my daydreams, imagining the filthy yet romantic things he could tell me in that voice.

Good girl, I hear his words from years back. *Good girl.*

"Leighton?" Rylan narrows her eyes at me.

I'm confused by the irritation on her face. My best friend smiles harder and brighter than anyone I've ever met. Every second of every day without fail.

Oh, shit. I'm the problem. I'm the one who's messed up, who's staring at her dad as if he's the most magical creature in the universe.

I've done my best to avoid doing just that for years. Kept my eyes off my best friend's dad whenever she was around.

Now, this. I'm the worst friend ever.

"Marcus." My lips stretch with a broad, fake smile. On the inside, I'm dying a humiliating, painful death at being caught. "Hi. I'm great, thanks. How was your day?"

He smirks. A small curve of his lips on his otherwise hardened face.

"Such good manners." Marcus repeats the same words he says nearly every day.

"What about me?" Rylan tugs on his hand, reciting the same question.

"You know I think the world of you, sweetheart." He tilts his head down, his smile sincere. "My favorite girl."

"And you're my favorite everything." She beams, her adoration for her dad seeping from her every pore.

They've always been like this. He's been showering her with affection—as much as Marcus is able to show—and she's been eager for every ounce of him that he has to offer.

Completely understandable, given their circumstances. Rylan doesn't have any other family. Her grandparents passed away a long time ago.

She’s never had a mother or a mother figure around. The closest thing to a mom was Marcus’s two girlfriends over the years when she and I were much younger.

Naturally, I’d been jealous of them. But I hoped they’d stayed longer than they had. It would’ve been good for Rylan to have another parent to love her. They hadn’t. Both ghosted Marcus after a few short months of dating. After the second one, he gave up.

So, for over eight years, it’s been just the two of them. No wonder she doesn’t want to let go of him or her role as his child.

Hope blooms in my chest. This isn’t a bad thing. Maybe there’s a chance he can still see me as an adult. All he has to do is say the word, and I’m his. Rylan would grow to approve of us, I’m sure of that.

Delusional. The man doesn’t want you. Get over yourself.

“Leighton.” Marcus cuts through my thoughts, melting me into a puddle with his deep voice. “To your question.”

“Yes?” Holy fuck, did I finally do it? Did I ask him to marry me while I’d been daydreaming?

“My day was good. Just like the rest of them. Thank you for asking.”

Phew. No accidental marriage proposals.

“Would you two girls like me to cook, or do you prefer we order in?”

Girls. Ugh. The butterflies fluttering in my belly die a mortifying death.

Suck it up and move on, Leigh.

“It’s your turn to choose, Ry,” I direct the question to her, glad to focus on my best friend instead of her dad.

“Mmm.” She taps a finger on her chin, smiling again. “Pizza while watching the first *Halloween* movie?”

Two of Marcus’s least favorite. Both food and movie-wise. I’m not a huge pizza fan myself, but he *really* doesn’t like it.

I know what his answer will be before it leaves his lips.

“I’ll sit both out if that’s okay.” Marcus nods, patting her head again.

Rylan stands up, throwing her arms around his neck. Her cutoff jeans and pink T-shirt hike up her slim body when she does, though she doesn’t seem to notice.

“What will you eat, Dad?” She pretends to sound sad.

I recognize the voice, and I chuckle inwardly. Now I get what’s going on. She wants to talk to me about boys. About *a* boy. Without her dad listening in.

Her being upset wasn't about me ogling Dr. Kingston. Something happened with Milo.

Thank God.

"Don't worry about me." He rubs on her back and then pulls away. Marcus heads to their open kitchen, placing his messenger bag on the counter. "I'll choose between the leftovers from the organic place Leighton ordered from yesterday or the Italian from the day before that in the study."

Eep. He likes the food I ordered.

Another praise I'm misinterpreting. Because it's just food. Just. Food.

"Good choice, by the way, Leighton."

"Thanks." I tuck my hair behind my ear, hating how high-pitched my voice sounds.

It's hard to talk when I'm choked by my own misguided emotions.

Rylan's gaze sears me another time today. I don't look at her, but I feel the burn. The resentment.

When I twist my gaze to her, I'm proven wrong. All I'm faced with is her sweet smile.

Fuck, I've spent way too many hours in the sun today. First, I imagine that Marcus likes me, then that she hates me? I'm losing it.

Rylan doesn't hate me. She can't. She's my bestie. My ride or die. My sister from another—thank fuck for that—mister.

Another reason why I'm being a total dick, crushing on her father the way I do.

It's more than a crush.

Useless. It's absolutely useless to think about it.

For the time being. I'll wait for tonight when Rylan sneaks out to another one of her hacking competitions to get my fix. I'll be better tomorrow.

Less horny and hence less starry-eyed.

"I'm a little dehydrated," I whisper to Rylan. "Could you get me some water while I order us pizza and put the movie on?"

I don't want Marcus overhearing me say yes and getting me water himself. He'd do that. He has done that in the past. He's old-school like that. Hot like that. But Rylan didn't like it. She'll hate it even worse today, if the way she's acting is any indication.

"Hey, you okay?" Rylan presses the back of her hand to my forehead. My sweet friend, concerned about me zoning out. "You're hot. Damn. I

should’ve noticed this earlier. I’m so sorry for not getting you a drink, Leigh.”

“Leighton?” Marcus lifts his head from his phone.

“It’s my fault.” I ignore him, whispering to Rylan with a small, reassuring smile on my face. “I’m a big girl. I shouldn’t have neglected it after I fell asleep by the pool.”

“This blame game could last forever. I’ll get you water.” Rylan winks at me, trotting off to the kitchen to get me the water. “Tomorrow, I’m watching you like a hawk, girlie.”

When she returns, she places a chilled water bottle in my hand.

“Thanks.” I pop the cap off the bottle and watch her return to her dad’s side.

In the kitchen, she and Marcus talk some more in hushed voices. The fridge opens and closes, and I turn my eyes fixed on the television, putting *Halloween* on.

I’m dying to sneak glances in their direction. Especially when the sound of a jacket being shrugged off fills my ears. When I picture Marcus rolling up the sleeves of his shirt up his corded forearms.

Instead, I grab my phone from the end table at my other side, go on the food app, and order us pizza.

That’s the friendly thing to do.

The only thing I can do.

• • • • • • • • •

I was right to assume Rylan needed to talk boys.

Once her dad went up to his study—holding the organic takeover container from the order *I* placed yesterday—she started gushing over Milo Bauer.

My face betrayed nothing while she told me how she believed that this year would be the year. The year he’ll ask her out.

I smiled when she explained in great detail how it only made sense that he hadn’t made a move until now. His pre-med school had been intense. He didn’t have time for a serious relationship. This year, though, he’d have more time. This year, he’d ask her out.

Having to sit there, nod, and lie to my best friend was pure torture. My chest constricted and my mouth dried. My body was burdened by the bitter

truth.

Pre-med and school, my ass.

Milo hadn’t been preoccupied with school.

It’d been me that stopped him from asking Ry out.

I became aware of his unwanted feelings one day during our junior year in high school. Milo dragged me into an empty classroom. Admitted that he was in love with me. Wanted to marry me.

The answer I gave Milo was a definite no.

As handsome as he was with his blond, perfectly styled hair and bright blue eyes, Milo Bauer had never been the one for me. My heart had been beating for another man for years. I refused to settle for anyone else.

I also refused to betray my best friend. She’d been in love with Milo for as long as I’d been crushing over her dad. I’d always choose her over Milo. Over anyone.

He said he’d never stop trying, and I got mad. I told him I wouldn’t change my mind. Threatened him not to try to get to me through Rylan. Said that if he’d try, I’d never speak to him again. That it’d embarrass me to tell both I wasn’t into him again and again.

Granted, it was an excuse. I didn’t tell him she was in love with him. She’d made me swear I wouldn’t say a word, and I kept my mouth shut.

Ever since, both Milo and I continued exactly like this. He’d chased me. Applied to the same college Ry and I had. Cornered me and begged to give him a chance every other month.

No, Milo, were the two words I’d been repeating.

I hadn’t stopped there. I’d done everything to push Ry in another guy’s direction. She was gorgeous and her smile was mesmerizing. Men and boys alike chased her.

She always had her sights set on freaking Milo, who treats her like nothing more than a friend. At least he doesn’t lead her on.

That’s the heavy burden I carry with me every day. This bitter truth.

Thankfully, I don’t have to lie anymore tonight. Rylan snuck out about an hour ago.

And I get to have a few stolen moments with him.

Dr. Kingston.

Just the mention of his name in my head has wetness pooling between my thighs.

This late at night, my inhibitions tend to lower. My subconscious becomes a demanding voice in my head.

I'm able to tell myself things I'd never dare to admit to myself in broad daylight.

My crush on Marcus isn't a crush.

What I feel for him is an obsession.

Which is the force that pushes me off Ry's bed, like I have many times in the past four years.

My feet land silently on the thick, pink carpet, and I tiptoe my way out of the empty room.

Silence prevails from the other side of the door as I press my ear to it. No Marcus walking around the house or talking over the phone to a colleague or a patient. Silence.

I peek out of the door and hear the dull sound of music coming from his room. The stalker that I am, I know it means he's either about to fall asleep or he jerks off.

Both options excite me. Both turn me on.

Desire has me slipping out the room toward him. I wonder what songs he's playing tonight. Whether he's shirtless or not. If I'll get to see streaks of silver moonbeams illuminating his corded arms. His sculpted chest. The sexy angles of his jaw.

What I don't have to wonder about is the tattoo of Rylan's birthdate. Marcus inked it to the arm closer to the window, sparing me from rubbing one—or many—out with the constant reminder of my best friend while I do.

I'll only see him.

Only him.

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